

**GLEANINGS FROM
THE
॥ŚRĪBHĀṢYA॥**

Dr P. NARASIMHAN

PUBLISHER

**ŚRĪ VIŚIṢṬĀDVAITA RESEARCH CENTRE
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While we pray to the Almighty and also endeavour, in what little way we could through our centre, to promote the study of Sanskrit and also specialised subjects in it like *Nyâya*, *Vyâkaraṇa* and *Mimâṁsâ* we also try to bring out treasures from great works like the *Śrîbhâṣya* in other languages, especially in Tamil and English in order to cater to the need of people, who lack a knowledge of Sanskrit but have a heart, nay, a burning desire to learn classics like the *Śrîbhâṣya*.

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S.V.S. RAGHAVAN

Chairman

Viśiṣṭâdvaita Research Centre
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PREFACE

The Philosophy of Râmânuja marks in a way a resurrection of the Upanishadic teachings, after the advent of the Idealistic and the other schools.

In fact, immediately after the establishment of the Advaita by Śaṅkara, serious and vehement attempts were made by philosophers like Bhâskara to dislodge it from the place of importance it assumed. But such attempts could not succeed because the alternate philosophies offered were either equally unsatisfactory or still worse. Their failure perhaps enhanced the prestige of Advaita more.

It ultimately took a Râmânuja to check the spread of this idealistic theory, question its validity on the basis of both logical reasoning and scriptural exegesis and offer a concrete alternate philosophy that meets the demands of the head and the heart, at once. And his philosophy has not only come to stay, but also has spearheaded the birth of numerous other schools, that seek to establish the supremacy of God and the reality of the world.

Being such a great school, it is but natural that the school of Râmânuja has been studied in detail and given systematic exposition by great scholars like Prof. S.S.Raghavachar, P.N. Srinivasachari and others.

Nevertheless, a clear presentation of the basic philosophical position of the Râmânuja school, based on a study of his *Śrîbhâṣya*, in contradistinction to the views of rival schools, as presented in the *Śrîbhâṣya*, remained much of a desideratum.

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It is nothing but sheer grace of God that made it possible for me to learn the *Śrîbhâṣya* at the lotus feet of the late Śri.U.Ve.Velukkudi Varadâcârya Swâmy, an unparalleled exponent of the philosophy of Râmânuja, in recent times. In fact, his stimulating lectures on the *Śrîbhâṣya* were one of the predominant causes in inspiring me to take up a study of the *Śrîbhâṣya*, for my Doctoral thesis.

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My present study under Śrī U.Ve.P.M. Cakravarty Ācārya Swāmy, a peerless master in *Nyāya* and *Vedānta* has also been of immense help in a more thorough understanding of the Râmânuja school and in my revising some of the portions of my thesis.

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My good friends Śrī C. Rāghavan and Dr. N. Sujātā and my wife Smt. S.Ushā were of immense help during the preparation of the thesis. I am ever indebted to them.

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ABBREVIATIONS

<i>A.S.</i>	- <i>Adhikaraṇasārāvali</i>
<i>Ait.Up.</i>	- <i>Aitareyopaniṣad</i>
<i>B.G.</i>	- <i>Bhagavadgītā</i>
<i>B.G.B.R.</i>	- <i>Bhagavadgītābhāṣya</i> of Śrī Rāmānuja
<i>B.S.</i>	- <i>Brahmasūtra-s</i>
<i>B.S.S.B.</i>	- <i>Brahmasūtraśaṅkarabhāṣya</i>
<i>Br.Up.</i>	- <i>Brhadaranyakopaniṣad</i>
<i>Ch.Up.</i>	- <i>Chāndogyopaniṣad</i>
<i>G.S.</i>	- <i>Gūḍhārthasaṅgrahaḥ</i>
<i>J.S</i>	- <i>Jaiminisūtra-s</i>
<i>Kaṭh.Up.</i>	- <i>Kaṭhopaniṣad</i>
<i>M.S.</i>	- <i>Manu Smṛti</i>
<i>Muṇḍ.Up.</i>	- <i>Muṇḍakopaniṣad</i>
<i>Nṛ.Tāp.Up.</i>	- <i>Nṛsimha Tāpaniyopaniṣad</i>
<i>Pra.Up.</i>	- <i>Praśnopaniṣad</i>
<i>Ś.B.</i>	- <i>Śrībhāṣya</i>
<i>S.K.</i>	- <i>Sāṅkyakārikā</i>
<i>Ś.P.</i>	- <i>Śrutaprakāśikā</i>
<i>S.T.K.</i>	- <i>Sāṅkhya-Tattva-Kaumudi</i>
<i>Sub.Up.</i>	- <i>Subalopaniṣad</i>
<i>Śvet.Up.</i>	- <i>Śvetāśvataropaniṣad</i>
<i>Tai.Ānand</i>	- <i>Taittariya Ānandavalli</i>
<i>Tai.Ār.Pur.Sū</i>	- <i>Taittariya Āranyaka - Puruṣa Sūkta</i>
<i>Tai.Nār.Anu</i>	- <i>Taittariya Nārāyaṇa Anuvāka</i>
<i>V.P.</i>	- <i>Viṣṇupurāṇa</i>
<i>V.S</i>	- <i>Viśiṣṭādvaitasiddhīḥ</i>

CHAPTER I

PROLOGUE

An attempt is made in the present work to present the philosophy of Śrī Rāmānuja as could be gleaned from the *Śrībhāṣya*, his celebrated commentary on the *Brahmasūtra*-s. The *Brahmasūtra*-s lay down the principles of interpretation of the *Upaniṣad*-s. Hence the *Śrībhāṣya* too, in the ultimate analysis, seeks to give the philosophy of the *Upaniṣad*-s.

1.1 ABOUT THE *UPANIṢAD*-S

The *Upaniṣad*-s form the concluding portion of the *Veda*-s, which are believed to be revealed and eternal. The *Veda*-s thus possess two unique characteristics - *nityatva* and *apauruṣeyatva*. Since the *Upaniṣad*-s constitute the concluding section of the *Veda*-s, they are also referred to as *Vedānta*-s. Generally the term *Veda* is used to refer to the section excluding the *Upaniṣad*-s and the term *Vedānta* to denote the *Upaniṣad*-s, though they from a single unit and share common characteristics. The *Veda*-s and the *Upaniṣad*-s are also known as *Pūrvakāṇḍa* or *Karmakāṇḍa* and *Uttarakāṇḍa* or *Brahmakāṇḍa* respectively. As the names themselves suggest, the *Karmakāṇḍa* deals predominantly with the various sacrificial rites (*Karma*-s) and the *Brahmakāṇḍa* with *Brahman*, the Ultimate Reality.

The *Veda*-s which thus are divided broadly into *Pūrva* and *Uttarakāṇḍa*-s are mainly concerned

with the four-fold ends of human endeavour (*puruṣārtha-s*) namely, *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mokṣa*. While the *Pūrvakāṇḍa* primarily deals with the first three goals, the *Uttarakāṇḍa* is chiefly *mokṣa*-oriented.

Further the *Brahmakāṇḍa* or the *Upaniṣad-s* indulge also in philosophical inquiries such as the nature of the soul, of God, etc. They mainly speak of the entity called Brahman which, according to them, is immanent everywhere and is the source, the sustainer and the redeemer of the entire universe and also is its absolute controller.

1.2 THE NEED FOR *MĪMĀṂŚĀ*

The plurality of the *Upaniṣad-s* and the complex and diverse topics dealt with in them make it difficult to know their exact significance, which thus calls for a systematic inquiry into them. Similarly the *Veda-s* also need to be inquired into in order to determine their chief import. Such an inquiry is known as *Mīmāṁśā*.

The term *mīmāṁśā* which means inquiry involves a sense of reverence in regard to the subject inquired into (*pūjya viṣaya vicāro mīmāṁśā*). The *mīmāṁśā* regarding the *pūrvakāṇḍa* is called the *Pūrvamīmāṁśā* or *Karmamīmāṁśā*, and that concerning the *Upaniṣad-s* is called the *Uttaramīmāṁśā*. The latter is known by several other names also, such as *Śārīrakamīmāṁśā*, *Brahmamīmāṁśā*, *Brahmasūtra-s*, etc., but the name *Brahmasūtra-s* has gained much popularity, by which name only the treatise shall be referred to in the present work.

There are reasons for the work being called by each name. Since Brahman forms the subject matter of the work, it is called *Brahmamīmāṃsā* and as it is aphoristic in style it is designated as *Brahmasūtra-s*. Regarding the name *Sārīrakamīmāṃsā*, however, there is a bit of controversy, which incidentally, could be settled only if the authentic purport of the work itself is determined.

The controversy is in respect of the sense of the term *Sārīra*. Saṅkara construes this term as conveying the soul, which abides in the *śarīra* (body), which in the ultimate analysis is Brahman itself. As the soul dwells in the *śarīra*, it is called the *śarīra*, and the *mīmāṃsā* concerning it is called *Sārīrakamīmāṃsā*.

According to Rāmānuja, however, the term *śarīra* stands for Brahman, to whom the entire universe consisting of sentient and insentient entities forms the *śarīra* (body). Hence Brahman is called *Sārīra*, and the *Sāstra* speaking about the *śarīra* is called *sārīraka* (Here the suffix *ka* is derived from the root *kai-śabde*). And the *mīmāṃsā* in the form of *sārīraka* is called *Sārīrakamīmāṃsā*.

Thus the major divergence in the views of the two great philosophers is reflected in the very interpretation of the name of the work, on which both have written renowned commentaries.

1.3 ABOUT *MĪMĀṂSĀ*

The *mīmāṃsā sāstra*, functions through evolving several maxims or *nyāya-s*, thus enabling

one to determine the meanings of passages of the revealed texts, through their application.

That is, a particular vedic passage is taken up for inquiry and its true purport is established, thus paving the way for interpreting passages of similar nature. This, in brief, is the function of *mīmāṃsā*.

The *Pūrvamīmāṃsā*, composed by sage Jaimini, consists of twelve chapters or *adhyāya*-s. And the *Uttaramīmāṃsā*, authored by sage Bādarāyaṇa, consists of four *adhyāya*-s. There is also another work consisting of four chapters said to be composed by sage Kāśakṛṣṇa, called as *Sāṅkarṣakāṇḍa* or *Devatāmīmāṃsā*, which comes in between *Pūrvamīmāṃsā* and *Uttaramīmāṃsā*. But the work does not seem to be extant in its original form at present, though a work by name *Sāṅkarṣakāṇḍa* has been published by the Madras University.

1.4 ABOUT *BRAHMASŪTRA*-S

The *Brahmasūtra*-s represent the culmination of philosophical inquiry carried on in the Vedāntic tradition. They seek to give the philosophy of the *Upaniṣad*-s in a systematic manner. They are composed in the aphoristic style and it is doubtful if it is possible to understand their meaning without the aid of any commentary. They have been handed down by tradition, and unless the tradition is known, it is almost impossible to have an understanding of them.

Hence the work has been commented on by several well-known preceptors, and each one of them claims that his particular commentary alone

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is the authentic one, and not the others'. Thus it is rather difficult to judge the most authentic interpretation of it.

Nevertheless, the unanimity of almost all commentators on the general drift of the *sūtra*-s and the topics dealt with therein, make it possible to determine to some extent, what could be the real purport of the *sūtra*-s.

Two of the basic presumptions of the *Brahmasūtra*-s seem to be that

- (1) the *Veda*-s are eternal; and,
- (2) the purport of all the *Upaniṣad*-s is one and the same.

In other words all the *Upaniṣad*-s speak with one voice and advocate one philosophy.

With these basic premises, the *sūtra*-s set out to prove Brahman as the causal principle of the universe, as enunciated in the *Upaniṣad*-s. Brahman is said to be the absolute controller of the universe; it has infinite powers and perfections, and is the ultimate goal of human endeavour.

It appears from a study of the *Brahmasūtra*-s that intense debates and discussions have raged among sages of the ancient times regarding the view of the *Upaniṣad*-s on several issues and results were arrived at. And in order to facilitate easy remembrance, they were recorded in the form of aphorisms as was the wont of the ancient Indians. This could be derived from the fact that, at times, contrary views are stated as the views of other sages, mentioning their names.

'The *Brahmasūtra*-s is a well-knit text divided into four chapters, each chapter, in turn, consisting of four *pāda*-s (quarters) making it sixteen *pāda*-s, altogether. And each *pāda* further consists of several *adhikarāṇa*-s, and the *adhikarāṇa*-s themselves consist of one or more *sūtra*-s. An *adhikarāṇa* is one which discusses a specific topic with possible or actual *prima facie* views called the *Pūrvapakṣa* and finally arrives at the right view called the *Siddhānta*. It proceeds on the following basis: a doubt is presented due to the existence of two contrary views - the *pūrvapakṣa* and the *siddhānta*. The *pūrvapakṣa* view is duly considered in the light of all the arguments in its favour and those against the *siddhānta*. Then the former is finally rejected refuting each argument, thus establishing the *siddhānta* view firmly. In the process, a maxim or a *nyāya* is evolved which serves as a guiding light in the interpretation of other passages of similar nature.

And each *adhikarāṇa* is well connected with its previous one. That is, the discussion in each *adhikarāṇa* leads naturally to another which is taken up in the next *adhikarāṇa*. And depending upon the nature of the discussion, there are one or several *sūtra*-s in each *adhikarāṇa*.

Though there is broad agreement, among the *bhāṣyakāra*-s in regard to the number of *adhyāya*-s and *pāda*-s, there is vast disagreement among them regarding the numbers of *adhikarāṇa*-s and *sūtra*-s. This is the result of combining or splitting of *sūtra*-s, omission or addition of them by the various *bhāṣyakāra*-s.

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1.5 THE BRAHMASŪTRA-S - AN OVERVIEW

Now we shall see the broad topics dealt with in the *Brahmasūtra*-s, according to Rāmānuja, which generally are in agreement with Saṅkara.

The *Brahmasūtra*-s, as has been stated earlier, consists of four chapters. The four chapters are divided into two couples (*dvika*-s), the first two forming one *dvika*, and the rest, the other. The first *dvika*, called the *siddhadvika*, speaks about Brahman as the cause of the world. The next *dvika*, called the *sādhyadvika* speaks about the means of liberation and the nature of liberation.

The first chapter in the *Brahmasūtra*-s is called the *samanvayādhyaḥyāya*. It is so named because, it shows that the import of all the Upaniṣadic passages that speak about the cause of the world either directly or indirectly, is Brahman. In other words, the chapter seeks to prove that all the *kāraṇavādivākyā*-s have got perfect agreement (*samanvaya*) in proving Brahman. Throughout the chapter, two streams of arguments are countered. One stream is that the world has for its cause *prakṛti* or *pradhāna* and another is that it is a sentient being. Through the process of exegesis it is proved that neither *prakṛti* nor *jīva*, (either a bound one or a released one) could serve as the cause. Even specific deities like Indra also could not become an explanation for the world process, who themselves are included within the world, and thus are subject to creation. Hence it is only Brahman, which is all-pervasive and

endowed with innumerable excellences and free from all defects, that is the sole cause.

The first four *sūtra*-s of the first chapter, however, form a separate section and are highly significant. They provide the necessary orientation towards the study of the *Brahmasūtra*-s. Special attention is paid to this portion called the *catussūtri* by many *bhāṣyakara*-s, who expound their system of philosophy, within these four *sūtra*-s.

The first *sūtra* - *athāto brahmajijñāsā* commences the work with the specific reference to Brahman, which forms the central topic of the entire work. The *sūtra* presupposes an objection and answers it. The objection is that scriptures are not capable of conveying Brahman, as it is an existent entity. That is, the view of the *Pūrvamīmāṃsā* school is that scriptures are meant to prescribe what is to be done (*pravṛtti*) and what is to be avoided (*nivṛtti*), thereby serving some purpose. They are thus incapable of conveying something, which is an existent entity, and not of the form of any activity. This view is refuted in the first aphorism which forms an *adhikarana* in itself. It affirms that scriptures are capable of conveying an existent entity and in fact the entire scripture is meant to convey only Brahman and not any activity. Every *karma* prescribed in the *Karmakāṇḍa*, is indeed a form of worship of Brahman, whose essential nature is set forth in the *Upaniṣad*-s.

The second aphorism *janmādyasya yataḥ* refutes another objection that Brahman is incapable of being known, for want of a definition. And so, an inquiry regarding Brahman could not be commenced. This objection is set aside by giving the definition of Brahman as the source, sustainer and redeemer of the entire universe.

The third aphorism, *śāstrayonitvāt*, which constitutes another *adhikaraṇa* by itself is significant. There arises an objection that the definition given in the previous *adhikaraṇa* is more of the nature of an inference and hence *śāstra* is reduced to the state of re-statement (*anuvāda*), as it only speaks about what is already known from another *pramāṇa*, namely, inference. *Śāstra* could become significant only if it gives rise to knowledge about something that could not be known through another *pramāṇa*. If not, it will be rendered futile as none will take recourse to it, since it would teach only what is known through another *pramāṇa*.

This objection is refuted in the present aphorism, on the ground that Brahman could be known only through *śāstra*-s and not through any other source. *Anumāna*, which is the process of inferring something through what is observed, could at best show only which is similar to that which is observed. It is incapable of establishing an entity which is totally different from the seen and unseen objects of the world, which is at once immanent in the world and yet transcends it. Thus

the *sūtra* lays down a very important principle that the only source of knowledge regarding Brahman is *śāstra*-s and that Brahman has to be admitted in the way in which it is portrayed by them. The result of this view is that, as Brahman could not be proved through any other *pramāṇa*, so it could not be disproved either, by the latter. This view is very clear from the maxims arrived at from the *adhikarana*-s wherein the author of the *sūtra*-s uses the expression *śabdāt* and identifies the import of the scripture to be Brahman.

The fourth aphorism discusses the purpose of Vedāntic study. The *pūrvapakṣin* here again is the *pūrvamīmāṃsaka*, according to whom, only an activity (*pravṛtti*) or abstinence (*nivṛtti*) could serve some purpose. *Śāstra*-s indeed become purposeful only by making known some activity which accomplishes some purpose. Brahman being already accomplished, cannot become the purport of them, since it could serve no purpose at all.

The said objection is refuted by the author of the *sūtra*-s, by stating that Brahman is the fruit in itself. To be engaged in activity at all times, cannot indeed be a fruit for anyone. It is in fact, the other way round. The ultimate fruit for anyone is to get relieved from every obligation to perform any activity whatsoever. But the fruit could not be attained as long as one is in this transmigratory existence, and the only way to attain it, is to attain Brahman, the attainment of which constitutes release from bondage.

In this way Brahman constitutes the highest goal of human endeavour. Hence it could well become the purport of scriptures. It is thus that the entire scripture has Brahman as its primary import, and the *adhikarāṇa* itself is designated as *samanvayādhikarāṇa* to signify this aspect.

The actual inquiry in the *Brahmasūtra*-s thus commences only from the fifth *sūtra*. The four *pāda*-s in the first chapter take up for detailed investigation, passages that seem to convey insentient matter or a sentient soul as the cause of the world and establishes finally that it is only Brahman that is actually spoken of in these passages.

The division of the first chapter of the *Brahmasūtra*-s into four *pāda*-s, is based on the strength of the passages that seem to convey entities, other than Brahman. It starts with discussing passages with less force and proceeds to discuss passages with more and more force.

The first *pāda* is named *aspastatarajīvādilingakapāda*. As the name itself suggests the *pāda* discusses those passages which could only very vaguely be construed to convey the *jīva* or matter as the cause of the world. The second *pāda* is called the *aspastajīvadilingakapāda*, wherein the vagueness is lessened but still it persists. The third is called *spastajīvadilingakapāda*, wherein comparatively there are more marks in the passages to construe them as conveying *jīva* or *prakṛti*. The fourth is called *chāyānusāripāda* wherein the

degree is increased. They seem to be more in favour of being construed as indicating *jīva* or *prakṛti* as the cause.

In all these *pāda*-s it is conclusively proved that Brahman alone is the true import of all the passages. It thus emerges that Brahman is the sole cause of the universe without depending upon an extraneous efficient cause. It is both the material and the efficient cause of the world.

The view arrived at in the first chapter is re-confirmed in the second chapter, by a thorough examination of all the actual or possible arguments against the view that Brahman is the sole cause of the world. A study of this chapter gives intellectual conviction that Brahman alone is the cause of the world.

The four *pāda*-s in this chapter are named respectively as *smṛtipāda*, *tarkapāda*, *viyatpāda* and *prāṇapāda*.

In the first *pāda*, it is established that the causality of Brahman could be countered neither by the texts that are not in conformity with the *Veda*-s, nor by mere argumentation.

In the second *pāda*, the author of the aphorisms rejects the views of the schools that are opposed to the view that Brahman is the cause of the world, by pointing out the untenability of their views on the basis of pure reasoning. Thus the *pāda* is justifiably named *tarkapāda*.

The third and fourth *pāda*-s too, re-confirm the view arrived at in the first chapter. The view that Brahman is the cause of the entire universe is sought to be objected on the ground that there are entities which do not become the effects of Brahman, like the *ākāśa* or the *ātman*. Further the vedāntic passages themselves, are contradictory among themselves, and so they cannot be relied upon. These objections are dispelled, and it is established that there are no entities which do not become the effects of Brahman; nor is there any contradiction among the Upaniṣadic passages themselves.

The third chapter is called *sādhanādhyaṭaya*. Herein the means of liberation, namely, the various *Brahmavidyā*-s (meditative exercises) along with their *anga*-s (subsidiaries) are set forth. Since the practice of the meditative exercises requires a sense of deep detachment from worldly goals and an intense desire to attain Brahman, the first two *pāda*-s of the third chapter are devoted to generate in the mind of the aspirant, these two factors.

The first *pāda*, called the *vairāgyapāda* highlights the miseries which the soul experiences in its various states, as long as it is in transmigratory existence, with a view to turn the mind of the aspirant away from worldly pursuits which confine the soul in bondage.

The second *pāda*, called the *ubhayalingapāda*, speaks of Brahman as the abode of innumerable auspicious qualities, and as opposed to all that

which is inauspicious. This is emphasized in order to arouse a desire towards Brahman. Thus in this *pāda*, Brahman is said to possess two unique features (*ubhayalinga*) - *akhilaheyapratyanyākatva* (being the antithesis of all that is detestable) and *kalyāñagunaikatānatva* (being the repository of all virtues).

The third *pāda* is the *guṇopasāṁhārapāda*. The chief task of the *pāda* is to discuss the various meditative exercises and identify whether they are identical or different. Since the *Upaniṣad*-s are many in number, and the meditative exercises prescribed in them vary, there arises a need to discuss whether they are one or different. The result of the discussion is that, if it is proved that a particular *Brahmavidyā* in a particular *Upaniṣad* is identical with the one in another *Upaniṣad*, then in that case the qualities enunciated in both the *Upaniṣad*-s in respect of that *vidyā* have to be meditated upon. In other words, if it is determined that, the same *Brahmavidyā* is spoken of in two *Upaniṣad*-s, then the qualities that are omitted in one *Upaniṣad*, have to be added from the other. This is called *guṇa upasāṁhāra*, by which name the *pāda* is known.

The fourth *pāda* is called the *aṅgapāda* wherein the various accessories for the performance of *Brahmavidyā* are set forth.

The last chapter is called the *Phalādhyāya*. The fruits that ensue from the practice of the *Brahmavidyā*-s, are discussed in this chapter. And

incidentally, the first *pāda* of this chapter called *avṛttipāda*, continues the discussion of the third chapter itself, discussing further about the mode of practicing the *Brahmavidyā*.

There may arise an objection, that it should have been included in the third chapter itself whose specific function is to discuss the means. It is answered that it is with a specific purpose that this is discussed in this *phalādhyāya*. That is, the practice of *Brahmavidyā* means getting deeply engrossed in the meditation of Brahman and practicing it more and more intensely till it ultimately ripens to such a level as to result in a brilliant vision of God, which is as good as a perceptual cognition itself, called *pratyakṣa-samānākāra*. The pursuit of meditation with loving devotion gives rise to abundant joy, as the aspirant attains the vision of God, similar to that of perception. He therefore desires that this state must continue and hence looks for continuing it more and more. Since there is experience of joy, unbounded in nature at this state, the latter, although a means of liberation, becomes an end in itself. And in order to highlight this aspect, the discussion on meditation is included in the *phalādhyāya*.

The fruits of the *Brahmavidyā* are discussed from the second *pāda* onwards. The second *pāda* is entitled *utkrāntipāda*, which discusses the mode of departure (*utkrānti*) of the soul from the body, by the grace of God, after entering into the *nādī*

called *mūrdhanyanādī*. The sense organs including mind and the *prāṇa*-s lapse back into their sources and merge with the soul first. The soul then passes through the specific vein on the head, proceeds in the Path of Light and reaches the abode of God.

The third *pāda* is called the *gatipāda*, and it speaks about the path the soul travels to attain the world of Brahman.

The fourth *pāda*, known as *muktipāda*, discusses the nature of *mokṣa* that the soul attains and the work concludes with the profound declaration that the soul, once liberated never again returns to bondage - *anāvṛttih śabdāt anāvṛttih śabdāt*.

This, in brief, constitutes the subject-matter of the *Brahmasūtra*-s.

1.6 THE *BHĀSYA*-S OF ŚĀNKARA AND RĀMĀNUJA

The greatness of the *Brahmasūtra*-s could well be testified to from the numerous commentaries that are written on it. In fact, as far as the Vedāntic tradition is concerned, its authority is next only to the *Upaniṣad*-s. But of all commentaries, the *bhāṣya* of Śāṅkara and that of Rāmānuja stand out prominently.

Śāṅkara's *bhāṣya* is the earliest available commentary, which is held in high esteem for its depth, subtlety and lucidity. It sets forth the philosophy of *Advaita*, according to which the one and only Reality is Brahman, which does not admit

of any difference whatsoever. It does not admit even of qualities within itself, not to speak of the existence of things apart from It.

Rāmānuja's *bhāṣya*, in contrast, offers a no less important commentary, which easily matches with Śaṅkara's *bhāṣya* in its grandeur and depth, and is acclaimed for its forcefulness, philosophical perfection and logical acumen. The philosophy expounded by Rāmānuja came to be known later on as *Viśiṣṭādvaita*. Rāmānuja himself does not refer to it by that name. Unlike Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja has not commented on the *Upaniṣad*-s but yet has not left out any of the principal *Upaniṣadic* text uncommented, either in the *Vedārthasaṅgraha* or in the *Śrībhāṣya*.

The uniqueness of the philosophy of *Viśiṣṭādvaita* lies in the fact that it takes a comprehensive view of the entire gamut of scriptures without involving contradiction, or giving up the primary meaning. Rāmānuja himself sets this as his specific task in the *Vedārthasaṅgraha*:

tatra nānārupānām vākyānām
avirodhah mukhyārthaparityāgaśca
yathā sambhavati tathāiva
varṇanīyam; varṇitañca¹

It has to be mentioned, however, that Rāmānuja is greatly influenced by his grand preceptor Śrī Yāmuna who almost set the path for his disciple. Rāmānuja owes a great deal to his grand preceptor in the formulation of his own system and also in regard to the criticism of

1. *Vedārthasaṅgrahah*, p.179

Advaita. The concepts and criticisms of Yāmuna, found in his *Siddhitraya* and other works, are greatly developed by Rāmānuja in his *Śrībhāṣya*, and other works.

The aim of the present work is to present the philosophy of Rāmānuja, as culled out from the various *adhikarana*-s of his *Śrībhāṣya*. The work is divided into four chapters (besides Prologue and Epilogue), which deal respectively with the Nature of Reality, Nature of the Soul, Nature of the World and Nature and Means of Liberation. Rāmānuja offers his views on all these concepts after an examination of other views, which are proved to be unsatisfactory on the ground that they are opposed to the spirit of the scriptures, and also lack logical coherence. And of all, Ramanuja takes up the views of the *Advaita* school for a very detailed examination in the course of the discussion of the first *sūtra*. Hence a study of Rāmānuja's *Viśiṣṭādvaita* will not be complete without a study of *Advaita*.

Hence this work presents the views of *Advaita* and their examination by Rāmānuja, along with the latter's exposition of his own views.

1.7 A BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE WORK

We shall now give a brief outline of this work.

The second chapter is chiefly based on the first *adhikarana* of the *Śrībhāṣya*. In this *adhikarana*, Rāmānuja's main thesis is that the spirit of *Advaita* contemplated in the scripture, lies not in discarding

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difference of every sort but in accommodating it within the oneness of Reality. Reality, which is Brahman is not without qualities as conceived by the Advaitin, but is a repository of all the virtuous qualities. Thus the second chapter is devoted to proving the oneness of Brahman in the wake of difference. It further discusses at length the nature of Brahman, as having the entire universe consisting of the sentient souls and insentient matter as its body. The discussion about Brahman is taken up first, as it is Brahman which ensouls the world and makes the world what it is and also constitutes the final goal of the soul. This leads to a discussion about what constitutes the essential nature of the soul, and this is taken up in the next chapter.

In Chapter III, the views of some other schools on the nature of the soul are first discussed followed by Rāmānuja's criticism of them on the grounds of logical inconsistency and also contradiction with scriptures. This is followed by a detailed exposition of the view of Rāmānuja.

The soul, which is a sentient principle has the world which is insentient, for its purpose. In other words, the world subserves the purpose of the soul, and hence the discussion about the nature of the world is taken up in the next chapter.

The ultimate goal of the soul constitutes freedom from the travails of bondage and remaining in a state of bliss forever without any trace of misery. This indeed is *mokṣa* or liberation, and hence the nature of liberation and its means are discussed in the fifth chapter.

It was stated earlier that Rāmānuja has formulated his school after a thorough examination of the *Advaita* school. A point of significance that may be noted here is that Rāmānuja's criticism of *Advaita*, is not confined to that of Saṅkara alone, but covers a host of many other Advaitic thinkers such as Maṇḍana Miśra, Sureśvarā, Vimuktātman, Sarvajñātman, Prakāśātman, Vacaspati Miśra and others, all of whom were not always in agreement with one another on specific issues. A study of the *Śrībhāṣya* shows that Rāmānuja is fully conversant with the teachings of the above Advaitic preceptors too.

Another fact that is to be taken note of is that the system of *Advaita* has not remained static, or atleast it was not allowed to remain so, by rival philosophers. It had to defend itself against numerous attacks from a host of philosophers who arose from time to time. Consequently, it had undergone several changes and many of the views propounded by earlier *ācārya*-s were either given up, or modified or revised in the wake of objections raised. Hence it may seem that some of the objections raised by Rāmānuja are baseless, when viewed in the light of the modified version of *Advaita*. But an acquaintance with the ancient classics of *Advaita*, especially those prior to the time of Rāmānuja, would give no room to any such misgivings.

In the following pages, we shall deal with the concepts of *Viśiṣṭādvaita* as could be gleaned from the *Śrībhāṣya*.

CHAPTER -II

NATURE OF REALITY

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Is Reality, an undifferentiated unity, which admits of no duality in any form, or does it admit of duality in itself without compromising its basic oneness? Is the world that we are exposed to through our sensory experience, a mere illusion, or is it also real and existent in its own right? Are we ourselves (namely the *jīva-s*), who inquire into these aspects, mere apparent diversifications of the Ultimate Reality, being essentially non-different from it, or do we have distinct identities for ourselves?

These are very fundamental philosophical questions and the schools of Saṅkara and Rāmānuja stand sharply divided on these issues. While the *Advaita* of Saṅkara takes up the former alternatives on all these issues, the *Viśistādvaita* of Rāmānuja subscribes to the latter ones.

It is rather strange that both the schools, which claim to have been based upon the authority of the scriptures maintain mutually conflicting views on every major philosophical issue.

In the *Upaniṣad-s*, which are the chief source texts for both the schools, the major problem that is faced is the

relation of one to many. The *Upaniṣad*-s at some places¹ refer to Reality as a transcendental, supra-relational unity, beyond all divisions, change, activities, descriptions, etc., and at other places² speak of it as a being endowed with infinite powers and perfections, having within Itself, the world and the souls as its modes (*prakāra*-s); and, it remains as their inner self (*antaryāmin*) controlling them.

Further some texts of the *Upaniṣad*-s³ speak of Brahman as the material cause of the world. A material cause, as is well known, is that which undergoes change. But certain other texts⁴ identify Brahman as one which is not subject to change. The contradiction is obvious.

Again, some texts of the *Upaniṣad*-s point out that the soul at the state of liberation remains as Brahman itself, while some other texts declare that it only attains utmost similarity with Brahman, thus becoming Brahman-like, and not Brahman itself.

The great Ācārya-s who recognize the contradictions outlined above treat them to be only apparent, and not real, and are chiefly concerned with resolving these apparent contradictions in their commentaries and arriving at the true import of the *Upaniṣad*-s.

1. *Mund. Up.*, I.i.6, *Śvet. Up.*, VI.19,
Kaṭh. Up. II. iii, etc
2. *Śvet. Up.*, VI.8,19, *Tai. Nā. Anu.*, XI,
Bṛ. Up., II.vii, *Mund. Up.*, II.7, etc.
3. *Tai. Ānand.*, VII.1, *Tai. Br.*, II.viii.9.15, etc.
4. *Śvet. Up.*, VI.19, etc.

2.1 APPROACH TO REALITY - THE ADVAITA VIEW

In his commentary on the aphorism,

na sthānato 'pi parasya ubhayaliṅgaiṁ sarvatra hi⁵

Śaṅkara makes a pointed reference to the existence of two sets of Upaniṣadic texts - one referring to Brahman as possessed of attributes and other as free from all attributes.

He is of the view that Ultimate Reality cannot be viewed to have both the above aspects, each one opposed to the other⁶. It might be said that Reality acquires the qualities because of association with some limiting adjuncts. Śaṅkara argues that in that case it must be admitted that the qualities are not intrinsic, but are only extraneously presented. So we have to take that Reality is free from any quality. It is instructed with the view that it may be realized. And that aspect of Reality as endowed with attributes is instructed with a view that it may be meditated upon⁷.

Further the *Chāndogya* text

sadeva somya idam agra āśit ekameva advitiyam⁸

states that Brahman, the *sat*, is free from difference from insentient objects; it is free from difference from another entity similar to it and it should not be viewed as different owing to the different factors such as knowledge,

5. B.S. II.iii. 11
6. *na hyekarī vastu svata eva rupādviśeṣopetam tadviparītam ceti avadhārayitum sakyam, virodhāt-B.S.S.B., III.ii.5.*
7. B.S.S.B., III.ii.14.
8. Ch. Up., VI.ii.1.

bliss, etc., as they constitute its essential nature. This text shows that Reality is free from any duality whatsoever.

The *Brhdāraṇyaka* text,

*neha nānāsti kiñcana; mrtyoṣa mrtyumāpnoti ya iha
nāneva paśyati*⁹

clearly sets forth that there is no duality in Reality; it further proceeds to state that he who sees difference will experience phenomenal existence continuously.

The same *Upaniṣad* states elsewhere that the world consisting of the seer, the seen and the act of seeing, exist only as long as there is duality as it were. For the enlightened, however, when all these become the unitary *ātman*, the notions of the seer, the seen and the act of seeing cease to exist.

*yatra hi dvaitamiva bhavati taditara itaram
paśyati; yatra tu asya sarvam ātmaiva abhūt tat
kena kām paśyet tat kenā kām vijāniyāt*¹⁰

The *Viṣṇupurāṇa* too, the Advaitin states, emphasizes the fact that Reality is one only, and the notion of difference is only illusory. For example the passages,

*jñānasvarūpam atyantanirmalam paramārthataḥ
tameva arthaśvarūpena bhrāntidarśanataḥ sthitam¹¹
paramārthastvamevaikah nānyosti jagataḥpate¹²
tasyātma paradeheṣu sato'pi ekamayaṁ hi yat
vijnānam paramartho hi dvaitino atathyadarśinah*¹³

9. *Br. Up.*, VI.iv.19.

10. *Br. Up.*, VI.iv.14.

11. *V.P.*, I.ii.6.

12. *ibid.*, I.iv.38.

13. *ibid.*, II.xiv.31

state that Consciousness is indeed the ultimate; those who perceive difference, perceive only what is illusory. Another text of the same *Purāṇa*,

*so 'ham sa ca tvam sa ca sarvametad
ātmasvarūpam tyaja bhedamoham*¹⁴

instructs that one should give up the cognition of duality, as everything else given in perception is only an expression of the consciousness which is only one.

The *Bhagavadgītā* text

*kṣetrajñam cāpi mām viddhi sarvakṣetreṣu bhārata*¹⁵

declares that the cognizer in every physical body, namely, the soul is none other than the Reality.

From the above it will be clear that the texts of the *Upaniṣad-s*, the *Gītā* and the *Purāṇa* emphasize that ultimate Reality is free from all differences, the soul is none other than Brahman, and the world of objects is illusory in the sense that it does not have any independent existence apart from Brahman. Other passages which speak about the essential nature of Brahman (called the *sodhakavākyā-s*) negate in it either directly or indirectly all attributes, change, activities, etc. For example,

*niskalam niskriyam sāntam niravadyam nirāñjanam*¹⁶.
The *Taittariya* text

*satyam jñānam anantam brahma*¹⁷

states Brahman to be changeless, of the form of knowledge, and infinite. This text is particularly significant in that it

14. *ibid.* II.xvi.23.

15. *B.G.* XIII. 13.

16. *Svet.Up.*, VI.19.

17. *Tai. Ānand.*, I.1.

implies through the application of the principle of *sāmānādhikaranya* and through the use of the word *ananta* that Brahman is the Partless Ultimate. It is thus: *sāmānādhikaranya* implies identity; if attributes are admitted with respect to Brahman, then there will have to be admitted difference between Brahman and the attributes and also among the attributes themselves. The consequence will be that identity - the spirit of *sāmānādhikaranya* will be lost. Again, the word *ananta* in the above text means that Brahman is infinite, in the sense that it is not conditioned by space, time and objects. It comes to this that Brahman is all-pervasive, eternal and not conditioned by objects. When it is said that Brahman is not conditioned by objects it amounts to admitting that the objects of the world given in perception are non-real. If they are held to be real, then Brahman would be conditioned by them, and as a result the expression infinite used in respect of Brahman will lose all its significance. Thus this text -

satyam jñānam anantam brahma

does not declare that Brahman has changelessness, knowledge and infinitude as its qualities; on the other hand, it states that these constitute its essential nature. It further implies the illusory character of the world. It emerges from the above discussion, that according to the scriptures, Ultimate reality is Brahman, which is pure, homogeneous, constant, unchanging, free from attributes, activities, etc. It is pure knowledge and bliss, and is without a second and the world of difference is only an illusory appearance.

The world of illusion is projected by a primordial ignorance called severally as *anṛta*, *māyā*, *ajñāna*, etc., as stated in the following scriptural texts:

anṛtena hi pratyūdhāḥ¹⁸
māyāṁ tu prakṛtim vidyāt māyināṁ tu maheśvaram¹⁹
indro māyābhīḥ pururūpa īyate²⁰
anadi māyayā suptah yadā jīvah prabudhyate²¹
ajñānena avṛtam jñānam tena muhyanti jantavah²²

And to remain as Brahman after getting freed from *avidyā* is what is known as liberation and the chief role of the *Upaniṣad*-s lies in imparting this truth²³.

Liberation which is Brahman is attained as it were, through the removal of *avidyā* by the knowledge of Brahman - the only being. The *Chāndogya* text for instance, states that one who realizes Brahman, the only one, never again experiences phenomenal existence.

na punar mr̥tyave tadekāṁ paśyati
na paśyo mr̥tyum paśyati²⁴

The *Taittariya* text -

*yadāhyeva eṣa etasminnadr̥ṣye 'nātmye'nirukte
 anilayane 'bhayam̄ pratiṣṭhām vindate atha
 so 'bhayangato bhavati²⁵*

also confirms the view that he alone whose mind is concentered upon the Being, which lies beyond the scope of sense-organs, which is free from embodiment, transcends speech and which requires no support, crosses over fear in the form of transmigratory experience.

18. *Ch.Up., VIII.iii.2.*

19. *Svet.Up., IV.10.*

20. *Br. Up., IV. v. 19.*

21. *Māṇd. Kārika, II.21.*

22. *B.G., V.15.*

23. cf. *B.S.S.B., Adhyāsabhaśyam*

24. *Ch.Up., VII.xxvi.2.*

25. *Tai. Anand., VII.2.*

Also the *Mundaka* text -

*brahmaveda brahmaiva bhavati*²⁶

states that he who knows Brahman, becomes Brahman.

And the *Śvetāśvatara* text -

*tameva viditvā'ti mṛtyumeti
nānyah panthā ayanāya vidyate*²⁷

which points that the knowledge of Brahman is the sole means of liberation is explicit in precluding any other factor being viewed as the means to the latter.

From the foregoing discussion, it would have become clear that according to the Advaitin the *śruti* texts speak of Brahman as of the nature of consciousness, bliss, etc. The world of duality is non-real, and it is on this basis that Brahman is referred to as infinite too. The texts that clarify the nature of Brahman such as *satyam, jñānam*, etc., which consist of words in co-ordinate predication, speak of the identity of the essences; and these senses constitute the essential nature of Brahman. The knowledge of Brahman is the sole means to liberation which is nothing but the soul getting rid of illusion and remaining in its natural state as Brahman.

2.1.1 THE NIRGUNA AND THE SAGUNA TEXTS: RELATIVE STRENGTH

So far we have presented the *Advaita* view that Brahman is the only reality, the *jīva*-s are non-different from it and the world of duality is only an illusion. This view would render invalid the entire ritualistic section of

26. *Mund. Up., III.ii.9.*

27. *Svet. Up., III.8.*

the *veda-s*, and also a substantial part of the Upaniṣadic section. The ritualistic section of the *veda-s* prescribes ritual acts which are obligatory, occasional and propitiatory (*nitya, naimittika* and *kāmya*); and, in order that these may become significant what is necessary is difference among the agent of ritual acts, the act of carrying them out and the results that ensue from them. If difference were held to be illusory, the ritualistic section of the *veda-s* would not be applicable at all and therefore would become invalid. Further in the Upaniṣadic section too, the texts that speak of Brahman as endowed with attributes are to be treated as invalid, as the relation of attributes to Brahman is based upon difference which is considered to be illusory.

The result of the above argument is that when the *veda-s* as a whole are admitted to be authoritative there is no valid reason to treat some portions of them to be invalid or non-authoritative.

The Advaitin argues that treating one text as more valid than the other is quite in conformity with the accepted canons of interpretation. In the *Pūrvamīmāṃsā* it has been determined that, when there is a direct conflict between two scriptural texts, that which is the latter, would prevail over the former. This is called the *apacchedanyāya*. According to this, that which is *para* (the latter) is always more powerful than the *pūrva* (the former). We shall now explain the maxim in some detail :

2. 1. 2. THE APACCHEDA NYĀYA

The Pūrvamīmāṃsā-sūtra -

paurvāparye pūrvadaurbalyam prakṛtivat²⁸

discusses the passage

28. J.S., VI.v.54.

*yadyudgātā' pacchidyeta adaksināḥ sa yajñāḥ
saṁsthāpya tena punar yajeta; atha pratihartā
sarvavedasam̄ dadyāt.*

In the *jyotistoma* sacrifice, the priests should hop around the sacrificial altar, each holding the waist-cloth of the priest in front. If the *udgātā* - the priest who chants the hymns of the *SāmaVeda* - lets go the waist-cloth of the priest in front of him, then to expiate this, the sacrifice should be completed without giving any sacrificial fee to the priests, and the entire sacrifice has to be performed again. If *pratihartā* - the priest who chants the hymns of the *Rgveda* - does so, the sacrifice should be completed by giving the entire wealth of the sacrificer as the sacrificial fee. If the two let go the waist-cloth successively, then the sacrificer should conclude the sacrifice by adopting the latter atonement, and the former shall be annulled by the latter²⁹.

Thus the maxim says that in case of a direct conflict, that which is the latter shall prevail over the former - *paurvāparye pūrvadaurbalyam*.

Applying the same maxim it could be seen that in the case of the ritualistic section of the *veda*-s and the texts that speak of Brahman as free from difference, the latter being subsequent ones (*para*) shall overrule the former (*pūrva*), since a direct conflict is involved between the two, as was referred to earlier. And similar is the case with texts that speak of Brahman as endowed with qualities. These also are in conflict with the *nirguna* texts, due to which they are invalidated by the latter, which being the *parasāstra*, become more powerful. And the *nirguna* texts are accepted to be subsequent ones because, in order to negate *guna*-s in Brahman, there should first be a

29. Adapted from The *Saṁksepasārīraka* of Sarvajñātman, p.458.

possibility of their occurrence, which could not be known by our ordinary sense faculties. This is supplied by the texts that speak of Brahman as endowed with attributes (*saguna* texts). Hence the *nirguna* texts become the subsequent ones, due to which they are treated as more powerful than the *saguna* texts by the *apacchedanyāya*.

Thus it comes to this: scriptures teach attributeless Brahman as the Ultimate Reality, and the world consisting of sentient and insentient entities as mere illusions.

2.2 - POLEMICS OF THE ADVAITINS

From the foregoing discussion it would have become clear that according to *Advaita*, the final import of scriptures is the attributeless Brahman - a transcendental entity, and the only Reality. The world consisting of *cit* and *acit* is only an illusory appearance. The *acit* or the insentient matter is neither real nor an absolute nothing, while the sentient soul is not different from Brahman.

Great Advaitic thinkers like *Mandana Miśra*, *Vimuktatman*, *Vacaspati* and others seek to substantiate the *Advaita* view outlined above, on the basis of reasoning, some of which we shall presently see.

2.2.1. PERCEPTION DOES NOT COMPREHEND DIFFERENCE

In the previous section, we referred to the *Advaita* view that the final import of the scriptures is the non-dual Brahman - the sole Reality. But perception gives us a knowledge of the manifold objects which are taken to be *sat* in experiences such as *ghatassan*, etc. This contradiction between perception and *śruti* needs to be resolved.

According to some teachers of *Advaita*, there exists no conflict between *sruti* and perception. It is because, perception comprehends only the *sat*-element, and not the object characterized by difference. It is thus: there arises the knowledge of objects of the world to us such as "The pot is" (*ghatassan*), "The cloth is" (*patassan*), etc. But the rise of the knowledge of pot is dependent upon the knowledge of its difference from all other objects. This is because, when an object is comprehended correctly as that particular object, there is no doubt of the form 'whether it is a pot or not'; nor is it cognized erroneously as 'this is not a pot'.

This is possible only when the object is cognized as different from all other objects. Thus the cognition of pot is dependent upon the cognition of its difference from other objects. But perception is a unique process, in which there are no two moments, and hence it could not have grasped both the object as well as its difference from other objects. This is because comprehension of difference requires comprehension of the object (*the vastu*) and also the object from which its difference is known (*the pratiyogin*). But this is not possible as perception, being momentary, does not last that long so as to reveal the object and also differentiate it from other objects³⁰. Hence it must be admitted that perception does not comprehend the object either, as it has already been shown that an object could be comprehended only when its difference from other objects is known, which has been shown to be impossible. Hence it must be admitted that in instances like "The pot is", "The cloth is", etc., perception comprehends only the "pure being" (*sanmātra*), represented by the word "is" and never the individual objects. The comprehension of objects is rooted on illusion, and not on perception³¹.

30. vide *Brahmasiddhi*, Part I, p.45 See also *Advaita Vedānta*, p.150

31. *S.B.*, I.i.1, Vol.1 (Part I) p.97.

2.2.2 CRITIQUE OF DIFFERENCE

The concept of *difference*, according to the Advaitin, is a *pseudo* one. It is thus: *difference* or *bheda* may be accepted as of the nature of the object itself or as the property of the object. If *bheda* is accepted as the object itself, i.e., if difference from other objects that exists in pot, is treated as of the nature of the pot, then whenever there is reference to pot, there should be reference to *difference* as well, which however is not the case. It may be said that due to the absence of recollection of other objects, which are the *pratiyogin-s* of difference, there is no reference to it. But this is not sound because according to the present view the object and the difference are accepted to be one and the same. Hence it must be held that just as objects like pot, etc., are referred to without any reference to any *pratiyogin*, so *difference* too must be referred to without any reference to any *pratiyogin*. If this position is not admitted then one cannot say that *difference* constitutes the essential nature of the object, wherein it is present. Moreover one would have to view that the words *ghatāḥ* and *bhinnah* are synonyms, like the words *hastāḥ* and *karah*, which however is not the case. Hence the view that the object itself is of the form of *difference* is not tenable³².

It cannot also be held that *difference* is an attribute (*dharma*) of the object, on the following grounds:

if *difference* is a *dharma* of an object, then the two must be accepted as different from one another, for, otherwise it will amount to subscribing to the view that both are the same - the view, which has already been shown to be unsound.

32. *ibid.*, p.97-98.

Now if the object - A (say) and difference - B(say) are different, then another difference - C (say) between the two must be accepted. And this second difference - C must again be accepted as different from A, for the two cannot be the same on the grounds mentioned earlier, and so on, *ad infinitum* (*anavasthā*). It could be seen here that each preceding difference cannot be proved unless the subsequent difference is proved. But as there is no end to the process, no difference stands proved, as every subsequent difference depends upon the subsequent one and this goes on in an endless manner. Thus difference cannot be viewed as a *dharma* of an object, because such a view involves the defect of *anavasthā*.

The defect of *anyonyāśrayaṇa* too precludes the possibility of viewing difference as a *dharma* of an object. It is thus: in order that an object may be known as different from all others, its specific class characteristic (*jāti*) should be known. But the class characteristic itself could be known only if difference from other objects is known. Thus, as each one is dependent upon the other, it is not logically possible that either could be known. Thus difference cannot be proved both for want of *pramāṇa*, and also due to its logical untenability³³.

2.2.3. ILLUSORINESS OF THE WORLD ON LOGICAL GROUNDS

A question that would suggest itself, from the above discussion would be as follows:

when it is said that the objects of the world given in perception could not be comprehended by it, and difference by itself is an impossibility, the logical

33. *ibid.*, p.98

corollary would be that the world is not real. But on that account can the world be dismissed as unreal and totally non-existent like a hare's horn? If not, what then is its ontological status?

The Advaitin does not definitely hold that the world is something similar to a hare's horn, for otherwise it would not be possible to explain the fact of its being perceived. Hence, applying the criteria of reality and unreality, the Advaitin argues that one has to conclude that the world cannot be determined either as a real or as an absolute nothing, but is only an illusory appearance.

The criterion of reality, according to the Advaitin, is unsublatibility in the three divisions of time. And the criterion of unreality is imperceptibility in the three divisions of time, like the hare's horn. However the objects of the world, are perceived, but are not constant and abiding (*anuvṛtta*). On the other hand, they are variable (*vyavṛtta*) and sublated (*bādhita*). To this extent they cannot be viewed as real.

To be explicit: the objects of the world like pot, cloth, etc., are perceived to be *sat* as *ghaṭassan*, *pāṭassan*, etc. These objects have specific features enabling one to attribute names and forms to them. Thus pot is characterized by potness, and cloth by clothness; and each is different from the other. Now potness of pot is not common to all things and hence it is non-real. Similar is the case with clothness,etc., which too, being not common to all things are non-real³⁴. What is common to all things is existence (*sat*). All objects are perceived to be existent entities as in experiences of the form *ghaṭassan*, etc. Now applying the criterion of reality, it is seen that existence (*sat*), which

34. *ibid.*, p.99. See also Concept of Vyāvahārika in Advaita Vedānta, p.206

alone abides (*anuvṛtta*) in all and remains unsublated, is real, while factors like potness, clothness, etc. which are variable and unabiding (*vyavṛtta*) are non-real or illusory.

Illusoriness is defined as that which is given in perception, but is sublated by valid knowledge. A clear example is that of a rope, that is perceived differently as a serpent, or a fissure on the ground, or a stream of water. Here it is seen that one thing is perceived diversely as several other things which, however, are not abiding, but are sublated by subsequent cognitions. What is unsublated is the rope, which alone is real. Those which are variable like serpent, fissure, etc., are illusory appearances³⁵.

Similarly, in the case of the objects of the world like pot, cloth, etc., each is shown to be variable and the only abiding entity is existence. Hence every object of the world is illusory.

2.2.4 - EXISTENCE IS KNOWLEDGE

An objection arises at this stage: the above argument shows that perception comprehends only existence (*sat*) and that alone which is unsublated is the reality. Now if existence is accepted to be perceived, then it becomes an object of knowledge; and to that extent it will have to be viewed as different from knowledge. The result will be that it will not be possible to hold that knowledge alone is the reality and that there is nothing apart from that.

The Advaitin, however, holds that this unwelcome position does not arise at all. It is because, *difference* as an entity, as has already been explained, is an impossibility. Reality is essentially undifferentiated³⁶ and it is not

35. S.B., I.i.1. VOL.1 (part I) P.99

36. *supra*. pp.. 39-42

possible that there could be any trace of difference in it. It cannot be said that the *sat* element is different from *anubhūti* or knowledge, by being the content of the latter. It is because it has already been proved that difference as such, cannot be the content of perceptual cognition and also does not stand logical scrutiny. Hence the possibility of *sat* element becoming the content of *anubhūti* is far removed. We are thus forced to admit that the *sat* element is non-different from *anubhūti*.

Thus Brahman, which is infinite and of the form of knowledge, is the only Being that remains existent at all times and at all places. Nevertheless, existence is not a quality of Brahman, but is Brahman itself. The objects of the world, which are illusory, derive their existence from the underlying reality, and they do not have any independent existence. According to *Advaita*, knowing an object does not mean acquiring new knowledge, which is not possible. Knowledge is one and that is Brahman. Hence knowing an object constitutes the removing of the veil of *avidyā* that conceals reality.

This requires a discussion on the process of acquiring perceptual knowledge and it will show that perception does not point to the difference between the knowing subject and the object known, but rather is a process of unifying the consciousness conditioned by the mind and the one conditioned by objects.

2.2.5 PERCEPTION ELUCIDATED

According to *Advaita*, notions like subject, object etc., are external constructions and are not basic realities. The subject is consciousness conditioned by mind, which is a product of *māyā* and is called *pramātracaitanya*. The object is consciousness conditioned by pot and the like,

which is called *viśayacaitanya*. Due to the operation of *avidyā*, the one all-pervasive consciousness becomes apparently divided as subject and object. Now perception is the process through which the mind flows out to the place of the objects, removes the veil of *avidyā* and brings about a contact between the object and the subject. Once this is achieved, consciousness conditioned by the object, is manifested; and this manifestation is called perception³⁷. Hence empirical knowledge is a process of revelation rather than acquisition³⁸. There is brought about a unification of consciousness which constitutes the process of knowing. But as knowledge or consciousness is one with existence, as stated earlier, there is no question of the two being different or existence becoming the object of knowledge. As Brahman is existence as well as knowledge, revelation of knowledge essentially involves the revelation of existence; and the two - existence and knowledge - are not different.

2.2.6 KNOWLEDGE IS INVARIABLY SELF-MANIFEST

Knowledge, according to *Advaita*, by virtue of its being knowledge, is essentially self-manifest (*svaprakāśa*). Knowledge necessarily implies a knowing subject and a known object. Knowledge reveals objects of the world. Objects of the world are not known just by virtue of their mere existence, but by being cognized. Hence they are called *jada* or insentient, whereas knowledge is self-luminous or *svaprakāśa*. Thus a clear distinction can be made between the two-a revealing knowledge and an object revealed. In other words, the objects of the world need an

37. *Vedāntaparibhāṣa*, pp.31 - 36

38. Concept of *Vyāvahārika* in *Advaita Vedānta*, p.174

aid, knowledge, in order that they could be known. But the same is not applicable to knowledge itself. It does not stand in need of an aid to know itself; for, otherwise, it would become similar to objects of the world. Further it cannot be said that knowledge becomes the object of (another) knowledge like the objects of the world; for, that would mean losing its character of being knowledge itself. Hence just as a lamp reveals itself without depending upon any other luminous body, so also knowledge reveals the objects of the world and remains self-manifest, not becoming an object of another knowledge³⁹.

2.2.7 KNOWLEDGE IS ETERNAL AND ESSENTIALLY UNDIFFERENTIATED - SOME ARGUMENTS

The fact that knowledge is self-manifest (*svaprakāśa*), and that it never becomes an object of another knowledge necessarily leads us to another fact that it must be eternal. In fact the author of the *Iṣṭasiddhi*, in the very opening verse of his work sets forth the specific nature of knowledge or consciousness, which according to *Advaita*, is the ultimate reality.

*yānubhūtirajā'meyā'nantā'nandavigrahā
mahadādijaganmāyā citrabhittīm namāmi tām*⁴⁰

He also puts forth several arguments to show that knowledge is not subject to origination, and hence it has to be accepted as eternal.

Knowledge, which is called *anubhūti*, is accepted to be self-manifest. If it were not eternal, then it has to be

39. *S.B.*, I.i.1, Vol.1 (Part I) p.100.

40. *Iṣṭasiddhi*, *Mangalaśloka*.

accepted to be originated at a particular point of time, before which (time) it will have to be admitted as non-existent.

Now the problem is: the antecedent non-existence (*prāgabhāva*) of *anubhūti*, if at all could be known, could be known only through *anubhūti*, which alone is capable of knowing. But *anubhūti* itself, cannot be present to perceive its own *prāgabhāva*, for, if it were present, then there can be no question of its non-existence. And if it were not really existent then there is absolutely no question of the comprehending of its own non-existence. Nor is it possible that its non-existence could be known through some other *pramāṇa*, for there is no other *pramāṇa* that could comprehend *anubhūti*. That is, if at all the *prāgabhāva* of *anubhūti* is to be known through a *pramāṇa*, then what is required first and foremost is that *anubhūti* must be comprehended by the *pramāṇa*. But *anubhūti* being *svaprakāśa*, does not come within the range of any other knowledge. It comes to this that *anubhūtiprāgabhāva* too, cannot be comprehended by another *pramāṇa*. Thus as it is not possible to prove the *pragabhava* of *anubhūti*, it has to be admitted as unoriginated and hence as eternal. It is because, all other *bhāvavikāra*-s or changes in an object, namely, existence, growth, transformation, decay and destruction are absolutely dependent upon origination - the first change. The impossibility of origination - the first change-in the case of *anubhūti* precludes the possibility of other changes in regard to the latter. *Anubhūti*, therefore, is eternal⁴¹.

Further an analysis of the nature of *anubhūti* shows that it must necessarily be undifferentiated. The fact that it is not subject to origination shows that it does not admit of differentiation in any form. All that is manifold is

41. S.B. I.i.1, Vol.1 (Part I), p.107

necessarily subject to origination. *Anubhūti* has been shown to be un-originated and so it does not admit of manifoldness.

*yannānābhūtāṁ tadanutpannam na dr̥ṣṭam
api tu utpattimadeva dr̥ṣṭam⁴²*

It comes to this: *anubhūti* is like nothing. In other words, there is nothing similar to *anubhūti*, from which it may be viewed to be different. Thus there is no *sajātiyabheda* for *anubhūti*⁴³.

Further just as *rūpa*, etc., (which are the characteristics of objects like *ghaṭa*, etc.,) could not be postulated in regard to *anubhūti*, so also the characteristics like internal distinctions (*svagatabheda*) too found in the objects could not be attributed to *anubhūti*. It is because *rūpa*, etc., and also *bhedā* are objects of knowledge, and so they could not characterize knowledge. Thus *svagatabheda* also is not possible in *anubhūti*. It has already been shown on the strength of *śruti* texts that, consciousness is the only reality and that there is nothing else (*vijātiyabheda*) apart from that. Hence *anubhūti* being devoid of all types of 'distinctions, is necessarily un-differentiated⁴⁴.

The author of the *Iṣṭasiddhi* succinctly sets forth the above, in the following lines:

*na ca svatassiddhasya prāgabhbādayaḥ svato
anyato vā siddhyanti; ato 'jā, ato 'syā nānye'pi
bhāvavikārāḥ; janmādityvāt teṣām cetyanam ca
na ciddharmatvām rūpādivat; ato 'meya, nāsyā
meyo dharmo' pyastiyyartah; ato 'nantā. antasyāpi
meyatve ataddharmatvāt, ameyatve'pyananyatvāt*

42. *S.P. on S.B.*, I.i.1, Vol.1 (Part I), p.108

43. *ibid.*, p.108.

44. Loc. cit

*na tadvattā citah. kālatastāvadānanyam siddham
janmābhāvat. ata eva deśato vastuto'pi. anyathā
ghatādivat janmaprasaṅgāt. nahyajam
vibhāgyamasti janmābhāve nānye'pi
bhāvavikārāḥ syuh, atah kuṭastham sadaikarūpam
vastu svatassiddham iti⁴⁵.*

To summarize this part of the discussion: Ultimate Reality is Brahman, which is pure consciousness and which is of the form of existence and bliss. It is eternal and self-manifest and transcends all sorts of differentiations, namely homogeneous, heterogeneous and also internal. The soul in its essential nature is none other than the pure consciousness. It is not a knower and is not the content of I-cognition. We shall now discuss the nature of the content of I-cognition.

2.2.8 SELF DIFFERENT FROM THE CONTENT OF I-COGNITION

Sri Padmapāda in his *Pañcapādika* states:

ahamiti tāvat prathamo'dhyāsaḥ⁴⁶

The notion of I is the one that precedes every other *adhyāsa*. And this *aham-pratyaya* is the basis of knowership and all other subsequent *adhyasa*-s. Actually the I-cognition has two constituents - the *idamāṁśa* and the *aṇidamāṁśa*⁴⁷. In the cognition of I, it seems that one knows oneself. But knowability is a characteristic of external objects and not of the self. The self is *knowledge* and could not become an object of knowledge. Hence

45. *Iṣṭasiddhi*, p.1

46. *Pañcapādika*, p.31

47. *ibid.*, pp.85-86

what is known in I-cognition is the *idamariśa*, which is the *antahkarana*⁴⁸, a product of *avidyā*. Thus the soul, being pure knowledge, never becomes a knower, and knowership (*jñātrtvā*) is quite extraneous to it.

It cannot be said that the self is perceived to be a *jñātā* in instances like 'I know', etc. It is because, these are not valid cognitions, but are erroneous ones like shell-silver. In fact we have knowledge of the form 'I am a man', etc. But this does not mean that the self is a human being. Such characteristics which remain far-removed and totally unrelated to the self are superimposed upon it. So is the characteristic of *jñātrtvā*. An analysis of *jñātrtvā* itself shows that it cannot be inherent to the self.

Jñātrtvā stands for agency in respect of the act of knowing (*jñānakriyākartrtvam*). In fact, to know means to have a change of state. It is because, the notion that the self knows would never be significant unless there is a change of state. One must accept some change, on the basis of which alone one could differentiate the previous and subsequent states of knowing. But, according to *Advaita*, change is incompatible with eternity, which is the nature of the self. There can be either change or eternity, but not both. Hence in the case of the self, as *jñātrtvā* involves change it must be accepted to belong to the *antahkarana*, the insentient component of the content of I-cognition, which alone is capable of undergoing change. Further, just like colour, etc., which are given in perception, *kartṛtvā* too, which is equally so must be extraneous to the self.

And in instances like deep-sleep and swoon, there is a clear absence of the I-cognition and yet the self shines forth by itself and *Upaniṣad* declares it to be *svayam-jyotiḥ* or self-luminous.

48. *Pañcapādikāvivaraṇa*, pp.85-86.

Further, barring the *Cārvaka* school all others admit that the self is an entity that is totally different from the body. The body is inert, while the self is self-effulgent. The body is an object of knowledge, while the self is purely knowledge. Now if it is held that the self in a *kartā* or an object of I-cognition, then it will amount to attributing all the properties of the body to it which will in turn efface the self-hood of the self.

Kartrtva is only a state of being the substratum of movement or volitional effort. When we say 'a chariot goes' agency is attributed to the chariot in respect of the act of going. But it is only a figurative usage. A chariot cannot have free-will and act by itself.

If, on the other hand, we say, 'Devadatta goes' the usage is primary and a valid one. But here, the physical movement (*kriyāśrayatva*) and the volitional effort on the part of Devadatta to move, with a specific purpose in view (*prayatnāśrayatva*) - these two are involved. Here too, it can be said that *kartrtva* in the form of physical movement (*kriyāśrayatva*) belongs only to the body, as the self, which, being pure Brahman is infinite and cannot serve as a substratum of movement. But *kartrtva* in the form of *prayatnāśrayatva* has necessarily to be admitted in the case of the self, as the body being inert cannot think by itself and act.

The Advaitin, however, holds that the agency in the form of being the substratum of volitional effort also cannot be attributed to the self. It is because, volitional effort on the part of the self would imply change in the essential nature of the self. Further, it is clear that the inert body becomes the agent for one form of action - the physical movement. And if the self is admitted to be the agent of another form of *kartrtva* it will be similar to the physical body, as both forms of *kartrtva* involve change. Hence

volitional effort must belong to the internal organ - *antahkarana*, whose *kartrtva* is superimposed upon the self and the conscious - element of the self is superimposed upon the *antahkarana*, which alone initiates the world process⁴⁹.

In the same way, *jñātrtva* too can never be the property of the self, which is as much extraneous to it as the body itself. The content of the I-cognition, therefore, is only the *jñātā* and not the pure self.

Since *jñātrtva* is only an attribute of the mind, and since mind is not active in the states of deep-sleep and liberation, the latter is free from the notion of *jñātrtva*. Deep-sleep in fact vouches for the absence of the *ahampratyaya* even while one is in transmigratory existence, because that is what is one's natural state when all extraneous acquisitions recede and the self shines forth in its pure, unsullied form. But as this is not caused because of the annihilation of ignorance, there arises all the illusory notions like *jñātrtva*, etc., once the soul comes back to the waking state. In the state of *mokṣa*, however, which results after strenuous efforts, the seed of all illusions is completely annihilated. It is because of this that during the states of deep-sleep and *mokṣa* there is absence of *jñātrtva* and the I-cognition, as these are external acquisitions and not inherent features.

To sum up: the self is nothing but pure consciousness, which is Brahman, which is self-manifest. It is not a knower; nor is it the content of the I-cognition, as these features are extraneous to it. It is Reality devoid of all qualities or attributes. Owing to the illusory *avidyā*, it appears as a knower, known objects etc; and this is the logical significance of the scriptures.

49. Outlines of Indian Philosophy, pp.342-343.

2.3 THE OBJECTIONS

2.3.1. ATTRIBUTELESS *BRAHMAN* - AN IMPOSSIBILITY

According to Rāmānuja, the assertion that something is devoid of qualities is the same as saying that it does not exist. In his view, a Reality devoid of any characterization is an impossibility. Even the Advaitin is under obligation, according to him, to prove that Reality as conceived by him, is quite different from that accepted by other philosophical schools. And this the Advaitin could do only by accepting specific properties that characterize it.

For instance, the Buddhists hold that *kṣaṇikavijñāna* is the Ultimate Reality, whereas according to the Advaitin, Reality is eternal and not momentary. According to *Vaiśeṣika*-s the self is insentient (*jada*) and manifold, whereas according to the Advaitin, *Ātman* is *svaprakāśa* and one.

And it is through these characteristics - *nityatva*, *ekatva* and *svayamprakāśatva*, that the Advaitin, must differentiate the Reality as conceived by him from that accepted by others. Hence there is no way to deny characteristics, as Brahman is characterized by atleast the said ones. It might be said that *nityatva*, *ekatva* and *svayamprakāśatva* are not characterizations over and above the substratum (known as Brahman) but are Brahman itself. In other words, they are seeming *dharma*-s but are not disparate from Brahman⁵⁰.

50. Padmapāda observes in his *Pañcapādikā* (p.23)
*ānandaḥ viśayanubhavaḥ nityatvam iti santi dharmāḥ
 apraktve'pi caitanyāt prthagiva avabhāsante.*

This, however, cannot be maintained because if all these are Brahman itself, then it would amount to treating *nityatva*, *ekatva* and *svayamprakāśatva* as identical. *Nityatva* means eternity, *ekatva* oneness and *svaprakāśatva* self-luminosity. One cannot be the other and hence these are specific properties that characterize Brahman⁵¹.

In fact there is no *pramāṇa* that could point to an attributeless Brahman, including even one's own intuitive experience. According to Rāmānuja, to cite *pramāṇa*-s in respect of an attributeless Brahman, is itself a contradiction; for all *pramāṇa*-s give rise to knowledge of an object only as associated with specific characteristics⁵². It is through *pramāṇa*-s that we get knowledge about the objects of the world. Hence Rāmānuja first makes a detailed examination of the nature of *pramāṇa*-s to show that no *pramāṇa* can be adduced to prove a *nirviśeṣavastu*.

2.3.2. ŠABDA DOES NOT PROVE A NIRVIŠEŠAVASTU

Rāmānuja first proves that the inherent nature of *śabda* as a *pramāṇa* is to provide us with the knowledge of an object associated with some specific characteristics. He then takes up select texts from *śruti*, *smṛti* and *purāṇa*, which fall under the category of *śabda-pramāṇa* and proves that they convey only an entity endowed with characteristics. *Śabda-pramāṇa* functions in its aspect of being a group of sentences. A sentence is only a group of words, and word is only a unit of a stem and a suffix. Stem and suffix have different meanings. Hence the word-meaning cannot be anything but a complex entity. When it is thus clear that a word could convey only a complex

51. *S. B.*, I.i.1, Vol.1 (part I), p.143

52. *ibid.*, p.114, pp.142-143

entity, it goes without saying that a sentence which is a group of words cannot convey anything but a complex entity. Hence *śabda* as such, cannot give us the cognition of an attributeless entity.

Now the Advaitin argues that, according to the maxim *yatparassa śabdārthah*, we have to hold that the purport intended to be conveyed, is the criterion in determining the import of a sentence. Hence sentences like *so 'yam devadattah* convey a non-relational sense, namely, the bare entity in the form of Devadatta.

In the words of Prof. R. Balasubramaniam⁵³, "The sentence means that Devadatta who is seen in this place, at this time is identical with Devadatta who was seen in that place at that time. The identity is in respect of the person concerned and not with regard to place and time which are the determinants of the person. The place where he was seen earlier is different from the place where he is seen now. Similarly the time when he was seen earlier is different from the time when he is seen now. It is absurd to say that Devadatta as qualified by one set of determinants (i.e., Devadatta-of-the-past time-and-place) is identical with this Devadatta as qualified by another set of determinants (i.e., Devadatta-of-the-present-time-and-place). The meaning intended to be conveyed by this sentence is oneness or identity of the person concerned".

The above view proceeds on the following assumption⁵⁴; the sentence *so 'yam devadattah*, consisting of words in co-ordinate relation conveys the sense of identity. But the primary senses of *sah* and *ayam* are complex entities, and so there cannot be any identity

53. Some problems in the Epistemology and Metaphysics of Rāmānuja, pp. 27-28.

54. *Paramārthabhūṣaṇa*, p.343.

between the two. If identity between the complex entities is insisted upon, then one will be forced to admit the identity of the adjectival features also, of the complex entities, which, however, is an impossibility. The adjectival features are abandoned and the substantive features alone are taken into account.

The view set forth in the above paragraph, however, does not hold good. It is not an invariable rule that the identity of complex entities requires identity of the adjectival features as well. For example, in instances like the expression *nilo ghaṭah*, etc., it is obvious that there cannot be identity between the two adjectival features - *nīlatva* and *ghaṭatva*, and hence the *vīśesāna*-s have to be dropped, in accordance with the above view. But that proposition is not accepted by the Advaitin either. If that is accepted, then it would suffice to cite any instance of *sāmānādhikaranya* as evidence for portraying a *nirvīśesavastu* and there is no need to cite the specific instance of *so 'yam devadattah*.

Further, in the instance of *so 'yam devadattah*, when we observe the intention of the speaker and also the subsequent sense understood by the listener, it is not seen that there is any non-relational sense. Here the intention of the speaker is to convey the sense that the person Devadatta, who is seen in the present time at the present place, is the same as the one seen at a different time in a different place. It is not absurd to say that that Devadatta as qualified by one set of determinants (i.e., Devadatta-of-the-past-time-and-place) is identical with this Devadatta as qualified by another set of determinants (i.e., Devadatta-of-the-present-time-and-place).

If Devadatta is said to be present at two places at the same time then it would be absurd. But he is said to exist at two places at two different points of time. It is an

observed fact and also is the sense that is intended to be conveyed by the speaker. If the adjectival features are to be abandoned, then it would be against the intention of the speaker. Moreover, it is not noticed to be so in ordinary experience. The existence of one and the same person at two different places is possible, at two different times. If it is not accepted that the same person could exist at two different points of time, then it would amount to accepting the doctrine of momentariness of the Buddhists. But, the Advaitin accepts that, at the empirical level objects of the world are enduring and not momentary. Hence the passage *so 'yam devadattah* conveys the sense of identity of the person seen at a different place and at a different time. The adjectival features need not be dropped. That is, one need not resort to secondary signification.

It comes to this that the expression, *so 'yam devadattah* does not convey the sense of bare identity which is not the function of words in co-ordinate relation either.

2.3.3. PERCEPTION COMPREHENDS ONLY A SAVIŚEŚAVASTU

Kāmānuja accepts the classification of *pratyakṣa* into two types as *nirvikalpaka* and *savikalpaka*. But he holds that both the types of perception comprehend only *saviśeśavastu-s*. In regard to *savikalpakapratyakṣa*, there is no disagreement with reference to the fact that it comprehends only a differentiated entity. But in regard to the content of *nirvikalpakapratyakṣa*, there is divergence of opinion among philosophers. The Advaitin holds that the content of *nirvikalpakapratyakṣa* is *nirviśeṣa*. Rāmānuja argues that it is only *saviśeṣa*.

2.3.4 NIRVIKALPAKA AND SAVIKALPAKA PRATYAKṢA DEFINED

According to Rāmānuja, among a class of objects, when an object is cognized for the first time, it is *nirvikalpakapratyakṣa*.

*nirvikalpam ekajātiyadravyeṣu prathama-
piṇḍagrahaṇam*⁵⁵

And the cognition of objects of the same class subsequently is *savikalpaka*.

*dvitiyādipiṇḍagrahaṇam savikalpaka mityucycate*⁵⁶

The distinction between the two lies in the fact that when an object is perceived for the first time, it is perceived as something new without any reference to its having been seen before. In the case of cognizing an object of the same class subsequently there is a sense of familiarity. It is cognized as belonging to the specific class, in addition to there being the cognition of the object itself. In fact, in the case of *savikalpaka*, the familiarity caused is because of the fact that the object with all the attributes is cognized in the *nirvikalpaka* itself. Hence even in *nirvikalpakapratyakṣa* an object is cognized only as *saviṣeṣa* as that is what is testified to by direct experience also. In fact, in ordinary experience, an object devoid of all attributes is never discerned. Whenever an object is cognized, it is cognized as that particular object and it is because of the perception of its specific configuration. Thus there is no doubting the fact that, whenever an object is perceived, it is perceived with specific *viṣeṣana-s*. What is at issue is whether it is perceived as a familiar one and as a known object, or as a totally new object. There,

55. Ś.B., I.i.1. Vol.1 (Part I), p.118

56. Loc. cit.

however, is no denying the fact that even when an object is perceived as totally new, it is perceived with its specific configuration which is *jāti*, for, even that (*jāti*) is to be grasped only through *indriya*-s. And without the grasping of *jāti*, it is not possible to ascertain an object as it is. Thus even *nirvikalpakapratyakṣa* involves reference to an object as associated with specific features (*savīśeṣa*)⁵⁷.

Thus, in the scheme of Rāmānuja, there is no qualitative difference between the two types of perceptions - *nirvikalpaka* and *savikalpaka*, as both comprehend only a differentiated object (*savīśeṣavastu*). This, in fact, is more in accordance with experience.

2.3.5. ANUMĀNA CANNOT COMPREHEND A NIRVIŚEŠAVASTU

Anumāna, as the name itself suggests, is a *pramāṇa* that comes into operation after *pratyakṣa*. There is first the knowledge of the *hetu* in the *pakṣa* through *pratyakṣa* from which the presence of the *sadhyā* is inferred. Hence if Brahman is to be proved as *nirviśeṣa*, then a *hetu*, in Brahman should be cited to prove that it is *nirviśeṣa*. But the very fact of the presence of a *hetu* in Brahman will make it *savīśeṣa* and hence it is not possible to prove Brahman to be *nirviśeṣa* through *anumāna*. As Rāmānuja puts it, the assertion that something is *nirviśeṣa* because it is of such special nature, is similar to the one that one's own mother is barren.

*vastugata svabhāvaviśeṣaiḥ tadeva vastu
nirviśeṣam iti vadan jananīvandhyātva
pratijñāyāmiva svavāgvirodham api na jānāti*⁵⁸.

Hence *anumāna* could not prove a *nirviśeṣavastu*.

57. ibid. pp. 117-120.

58. ibid. p.123.

2.3.6 IN DEFENCE OF DIFFERENCE

According to Rāmānuja, it is not only that there is no *pramāṇa* in regard to an undifferentiated Brahman, but also that *difference* as an entity, cannot be dismissed as illusory. *Difference* is sought to be dismissed as a pseudo-concept, by the Advaitin, on two grounds: One is: perception comprehends pure being alone (*sanmātra*) and is incapable of comprehending *difference*. Another is: *difference* as a concept cannot stand the test of logical scrutiny.

Rāmānuja's chief objection is directed against the view that perception comprehends the pure being alone. According to him, it is neither experienced, nor can be proved to be so. If the whole of *pratyakṣa* comprehends the pure being (*sanmātra*) alone, then there is no need to classify it as *nirvikalpaka* and *savikalpaka*. Even according to the Advaitin, the content of *savikalpakapratyakṣa* is only a differentiated object (*saviśeṣavastu*). Hence it is contradictory to say that *pratyakṣa* comprehends only an undifferentiated being.

Further, if *difference* is not cognized, then how does one in need of a horse turn back on seeing a buffalo? Hence the fact that there is an experience of *difference* through *pratyakṣa* cannot be denied. It is no argument to say that it is experienced but it is only illusory. This is because, it cannot be similar to instances of illusions like shell-silver: for, the experience of *difference* is never contradicted like that of shell-silver; on the other hand, it is seen to be confirmed again and again. Further, in the case of perception of *difference*, no defect is noticed in the sense-organ and there is the knowledge of *bheda*, when all the conditions for the rise of knowledge are satisfied - conditions which are absolutely independent of the

knowing subject⁵⁹. And this knowledge, by virtue of being knowledge, is self-valid and there is no valid reason to deny its validity. Hence when there is neither defect in the sense-organs nor sublation at a later state, there is absolutely no reason to dismiss *bheda* as false⁶⁰.

It has been pointed out that difference as a concept cannot not be proved because of several logical difficulties⁶¹. First, difference, it has been contended, cannot be of nature of the object itself (*vastusvarūpa*), nor can it be its specific attribute (*dharma*), for, there arise difficulties to either of the two views. But according to Rāmānuja, though difference is not of the nature of the object (*svarūpa*), it is its *dharma*. That is, when an object is cognized, it is cognized as being shaped in a particular fashion. And this specific disposition is called the *saṁsthāna*, which alone is responsible for cognizing an object as a distinct one. In fact, according to Rāmānuja, what is known as *jāti*, is nothing but *saṁsthāna*, for there is nothing known as *jāti* apart from this, which is ever perceived.

It has been pointed out earlier that if difference is a *dharma*, then it ought to be different from the object and that difference again should be different from the object, and so on, ad infinitum. Hence difference cannot be proved, as it is associated with the defect of infinite regress⁶². But now difference is held to be nothing but *saṁsthāna* or *jāti*, which is capable of distinguishing the object from others as well as distinguishing itself (*svaparā-nirvāhaka*). This is similar to colour making an object

59. B.S.S.B., I.i.4

60. Viśiṣṭadvaitasiddhiḥ. p.215

61. infra. pp. 33-34

62. infra. p. 34

visible and remaining itself visible without the need for any other aid. Hence there is no question of the defect of infinite regress.

Again it was observed earlier, that difference could not be proved due to *anyonyāśrayaṇa*. That is, difference could be comprehended only when *jāti* is comprehended, and the comprehension of *jāti* is dependent upon the comprehension of difference. The defect of *anyonyāśrayana* is clear. Hence, difference could not be proved. According to Rāmānuja, however, there is no room for *anyonyāśrayana* at all, as both *jāti* and difference are one and the same.

2.3.7. ON THE IDENTITY OF *SĀMSTHĀNA*, *JĀTI* AND *BHEDA*

Our observation of the world shows that there arises the notion of commonness among several objects of the same kind like cows, dogs, etc., and also the notion of distinction of like objects from unlike ones. This, according to the *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika-s*, is due to the function of *jāti* or *sāmānya*. According to them, it is due to *jāti* that there arises the notion of similarity among objects of the same class and also the idea of distinction among objects of different classes. Hence they accept it as a separate category and define it as *nityam. ekam* and *anekānugatam* (eternal, one and all-pervasive).

Whereas according to Rāmānuja, it is true that there arises the notion of similarity and distinction in the above manner, it is not necessary to postulate a separate entity known as *jāti* for the purpose specified above. It is the specific configuration of called *sāmsthāna* that causes the notion of similarity among objects of the same class and that of distinction of the object belonging to one class from

that of another. Apart from *samsthāna*, there is never noticed anything known as *jāti*, as claimed by the Nyaya-Vaisesika-s.

*samsthānati rekiṇo 'nekeṣu ekākāra buddhi-
bodhyasyādarśanāt*⁶³.

Hence, according to Rāmānuja, the postulation of a separate principle known as *jāti* is quite unwarranted on the ground mentioned above. Further, *samsthāna* is accepted even by the advocates of *jāti* and hence *jāti* becomes superfluous, as its function is carried out by *samsthāna* itself. Hence the fact is that, what is known as *jāti* is noting but *samsthāna* itself, and not something apart from that, as no such thing is observed in common parlance.

*atirekavādepi samsthānasya sampratipannatvācca
samsthānameva jātiḥ*⁶⁴.

Samsthāna is defined as the unique configuration of an object, which has to be reckoned for each object.

*samsthānam nāma sva-asādhāraṇam rūpam iti
yathāvastu samsthānam anusandheyam*⁶⁵.

Further, there arises the notion of *bheda* only upon the comprehension of *jāti* and here again there is observed nothing known as *bheda*, as a separate entity. Hence *bheda* is nothing but *jāti* itself.

Now, the following objection suggests itself: *jāti* cannot be equated with *bheda*, for the simple reason that *bheda* is relative, while *jāti* is independent. That is, the word *bheda* expects some *pratiyogin* to convey its meaning, whereas *jāti* conveys its meaning independently.

63. S.B., I.i.1., Vol.1 (Part I), p.126

64. Loc.cit

65. ibid., pp. 126-127

But, according to Sudarśana Sūri, this difficulty does not arise⁶⁶. That is, even according to those who admit *bheda* as distinct from a *jāti* like *gotva*, the *abhāva* of *abhāva* (non-existence of non-existence) is accepted to be without any need of a *pratiyogin*, or else the process will involve the fallacy of infinite regress. Further, it is not observed in common experience too. Similar is the case with *bheda*, which is said to be nothing but *jāti*. What is to be noted here is that *gotva*, etc., which are class - characteristics distinguish an object irrespective of whether they are viewed as *jāti* or *bheda*. When there arises specific usage as *bheda* with respect to something else, there arises the need for a *pratiyogin*; and when there is no such usage, there is no such need also. Thus, it is only the verbal usage that makes the difference, while the object remains the same and discharges the same function.

Another objection may arise, and it is as follows: if *jāti* and *bheda* are one and the same, then whenever there is reference to *jāti* (like *gotva*), there should be reference to *bheda* as well, for both are the same. Rāmānuja's reply to this is that, there does exist such a reference, in as much as there is reference to *gotva*. And what is referred to as *gotva* is nothing but the distinction of the object from all other objects. Once the distinct configuration of the object such as *gotva* is apprehended, there is observed the absence of the knowledge or verbal usage about any other object. The notion of identity (*abheda*) after all could be removed only through the apprehension of *bheda*⁶⁷.

Hence, according to Rāmānuja, when an object is perceived as the particular object, it is perceived through its specific *sāṁsthāna*, which alone, in the final analysis,

66. *S.P. on S.B.*, I.i.1, Vol.1 (Part I) p.128.

67. *S.B.*, I.i.1, Vol.1 (Part I) pp.128-129

is *jāti*, as nothing apart from it is neither observed nor needed. Further, as this itself serves as the distinguishing feature of the object, *samsthāna* or *jāti* itself is *bheda* as here too nothing known as *bheda* is apprehended apart from this. When there is the specific intention to express the distinction of one object from another as *ayam asmat bhinnah*, there arises the usage *bhinnah* and never independently. Nevertheless *bheda* remains perceived. It was noticed earlier that as *pratyakṣa* is momentary (*ekakṣanavartī*) it is not possible for it to grasp the object as well as *bheda* within that one moment⁶⁸. But in the wake of the above clarification that *bheda* is nothing but *jāti* itself, even granting that *pratyakṣa* is momentary, *bheda* stands comprehended. This is because, as pointed out earlier, when an object is grasped it is grasped along with its *samsthāna* and hence the very fact that the object is grasped as such, proves that *bheda* is comprehended, as *bheda* is nothing but *samsthāna* or *jāti*⁶⁹.

In fact, according to Sudarśana Sūri, it is sheer dogma to hold that *pratyakṣa* is *kṣanika*. That there is the apprehension of *bheda* separately cannot be dismissed as illusory, on the ground that *pratyakṣa* is *kṣanika* and hence cannot remain as long as there is recollection of the *pratiyogin*. This is because, from what is observed, any *jñāna* should be admitted to persist as long as it is needed to carry out its function. Hence in the present case, even if there should be some delay caused due to the time taken for recollection, *pratyakṣa* should still be admitted to remain that long. But as *bheda* has been proved to be *samsthāna* or *jāti* itself, even granting the *pūrvapakṣa* view that *pratyakṣa* is *kṣanika*, *bheda* is proved to be grasped.

68. infra. pp 31-32

69. ŠB., I.i.1, Vol.1 (Part I) p 124.

*pratiyogismaraṇakṛtavilambe satyapi jñānasya
yāvatkāryasiddhi sthiratvam kalpyam, tathāpi
pratiyoginirapekṣa jātyāderbhedatvena eka-
kṣaṇavartitve'pi pratyakṣasya, bhedasya
sugrahavat dūrotsāritam iti bhāvah*⁷⁰

To sum up : the notion of commonness that arises among several objects of the same kind has led philosophers like the *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika-s* to postulate a separate entity called *jāti*, which is seen as a unifying concept. Again as each object is seen to be distinct, it was argued that there should be some aspect called *bheda*, which is responsible for the notion of difference. But, according to Rāmānuja, it is *sāṁsthāna* or the specific configuration which does the function of both. That is, in as much as it produces the notion of commonness, it serves as *jāti* and as it distinguishes the object, it serves as *bheda*. Hence apart from *sāṁsthāna* then is nothing known as *jāti* or *bheda*, as neither of the two is warranted nor corroborated by observed facts.

2.3.8. ILLUSORINESS - UNINTELLIGIBILITY OF THE ADVAITIC ARGUMENTS

It was earlier contended by the Advaitin that an examination of the nature of the objects of the world shows that they cannot be held to be real or an absolute nothing but have to be treated as illusory.

This is because, that whichever is variable (*vyāvartamāna*) and sublated (*bādhita*) is not real and that which is unchanging (*anuvartamāna*) and unsublated (*abādhita*) is real.

70. *S.P. on Ś.B.*, I.i.1, Vol.1 (Part I) p.123.

But, according to Rāmānuja, the concepts of *bādha* and *nivṛtti* are thoroughly misinterpreted by the Advaitin. When there is a direct conflict between two cognitions, then, one is subject to sublation and another sublates. That is, if something which is seen in a particular place at a particular time is found upon subsequent verification, not to have been present at the same place at the same time, then there is conflict between the two cognitions, and the one which is valid and consequently powerful, sublates the other. On the other hand, that which is found at one place at a particular time is not found at another place at another or at the same time, then there is absolutely no conflict between the two, and hence there is no question of one getting sublated by the other⁷¹.

In the instance of shell-silver, silver which was found at a particular place at a previous time is subsequently found to be stultified. That is, when verified later on, it is noticed that silver was never present in the place where it was found at the time when it was perceived. Hence the cognition of silver is sublated by the subsequent cognition and so silver found in shell is said to be illusory. But *ghaṭa*, *pāṭa*, etc., cannot be said to be illusory because of the fact that they are never noticed to be not present at the place where and at the time when they were perceived. Thus as the objects of the world like *ghaṭa*, *pāṭa*, etc., are not illusory, it cannot be contended that pure being alone is the Ultimate Reality.

Another contention that existence (*sat*) itself is knowledge (*anubhūti*)⁷², also can be seen to be not valid. It was contended that if existence were said to become an object of knowledge, then the two will have to be accepted

71. *S.B.*, I.i.1, Vol.1 (Part I) p.132

72. *infrā*. pp. 36-37

as different which will end in accepting *bheda* as a *padārtha*. But as difference as an entity has been shown to be impossible, there cannot be difference between *sat* and *anubhūti* and hence both have to be accepted as one and the same.

But, as explained earlier, according to Rāmānuja, *bheda* cannot be negated. And in the case of *sat* and *anubhūti* the difference between the two is given in perception and is never sublated. And there is no valid reason to show that difference is illusory. Hence it is not proper to hold that the two - *sat* and *anubhūti*, are the same.

Thus when *sattva* is something which is cognized through knowledge, it is not proper to equate the *sat* and knowledge. Further, as *sattva* becomes an object of knowledge it is not possible to undo the difference between them. Thus *anubhūti* itself is not existence.

2.3.9. SELF-LUMINOSITY OF KNOWLEDGE – RĀMĀNUJA'S VIEW

Though Rāmānuja subscribes to the fact that knowledge is self-manifest, yet, he differs from the Advaitin's view that it is invariably self-manifest and never an object of another cognition. According to him, knowledge is self-manifest, at the time of revealing objects of the world to the self. But it is not a *sine qua non* that it should be self-manifest at all times, for that is not only opposed to experience but also lands us in several difficulties. From the specific activities of other, like appropriating or avoiding the objects of the world, it is inferred that they have got knowledge about those objects. Hence the knowledge of other people is only *paraprakāśa* to others. Even in one's own case, one's past knowledge

is not *svaprakāśa* at the present time, for it is known at the present time as past knowledge as *aham ajñāsiṣam*. Hence it is not proper to say that *anubhūti* is necessarily *svaprakāśa*, by virtue of its being an *anubhūti*⁷³

Again, it was observed earlier that *anubhūti* cannot be objectified. That is, if *anubhūti* itself is apprehended by another *anubhūti*, then not only will its *svaprakāśatva* be lost, but also it will become similar to the objects of the world, with the result that it will become devoid of its character of being *anubhūti*⁷⁴.

But this is an obviously absurd proposition. It is a matter of experience that the knowledge of others is not directly experienced by us but only indirectly inferred. Hence those are not *svaprakāśa* to us. Similarly our own past knowledge is not directly experienced in the present time and hence is not *svaprakāśa* at the present time. And on this account they do not lose their character of being knowledge.

According to Rāmānuja there is no justification to hold that knowledge is essentially *svaprakāśa* and never *paraprakāśa*. Seen in the larger perspective of the conduct of the worldly affairs, it is seen that, it is through language that men communicate their experiences, ideas, etc. But if knowledge is held to be essentially *svaprakāśa*, it may not be possible to grasp the relation between words and meanings because words are the tools for communicating knowledge, and this means that knowledge is *paraprakāśa*. Hence if knowledge is said to be never *paraprakāśa*, words will never be efficacious to convey one's ideas, etc., and hence, observes Rāmānuja, the entire process of verbal

73. *S.B.*, I.i.1, Vol.1 (Part I) p.134.

74. *infra.* pp.38-39

communication will be eliminated from mankind⁷⁵. Hence, according to Rāmānuja, *jñāna* is *svaprakāśa*, no doubt but, at the same time the fact of its being *paraprakāśa*, could not be gainsaid.

That knowledge is invariably *svaprakāśa* is cited as an evidence to show that knowledge could never become an object of another knowledge. And it is contended that if *jñāna* becomes an object of another *jñāna* then it will lose its character of being *jñāna*, for *jñāna* is a manifesting factor and objects are manifested. The manifesting factor itself cannot become manifested.

But, according to Rāmānuja, it is wrong to say that, that which is experienced is essentially an object, and that consciousness can never partake of the nature of an object. According to him to be conscious, is to be conscious of something. That is, *jñāna* reveals itself only when it reveals some object. At other times it remains only as a potency of the self to apprehend objects, and is not *svaprakāśa* at that time.

*yattu jñānasya svayamprakāśatvam uktam
tadviṣaya-prakāśanavelāyāṁ jñātuḥ ātmah
tathaiva; na tu sarveṣāṁ sarvadā tathaiveti
niyamo’sti*⁷⁶.

Hence, knowledge is that which manifests itself to its substratum, as and when it is present or that which manifests its objects to its substratum.

*anubhūtitvam nāma vartamāna daśāyāṁ
svasattayaiva svāśrayāṁ prati prakāśamānatvam;
svasattayaiva svāviṣaya sādhanatvam vā*⁷⁷.

75. S.B., I.i.1, Vol.1 (Part I) p.134.

76. Loc.cit.

77. Loc.cit

In as much as these characteristics remain unaffected, it is immaterial whether consciousness becomes an object of another consciousness or not. The fact of consciousness being apprehended by another would in no way affect the characteristic of consciousness and render it insentient.

In fact objects of the world such as *ghaṭa* and the like, are insentient, not because they become objects of knowledge but because they are incapable of manifesting themselves or others. Thus when there is direct perceptual evidence of *jñāna* being comprehended by another, it is not justified to hold something contrary to this position on the basis of false logic.

2.3.10 ON THE ETERNITY OF CONSCIOUSNESS: UNTENABILITY OF THE ADVAITIC VIEW

It was earlier pointed out that consciousness has to be accepted as eternal. This is because consciousness being self-manifest and being an object of another consciousness cannot be proved to be subject to origination.

It is thus: *jñānābhāva* can never be known. It is because in order that there may arise a cognition of the absence of an object, it is necessary that, that object must be known. Hence in order to have the cognition of *jñānābhāva*, we require the cognition of the *jñāna*. Since *jñāna* is present, it cannot be negated. To get over this difficulty, if it is argued that *jñāna* is not known, then one could not negate knowledge at all. So, it is not possible to prove *jñānābhāva*. And this suggests that *jñāna* is not subject to origination. This in turn precludes the possibility of the five other *vikāra*-s like existence, growth, transformation, decay and destruction. Hence *jñāna* is eternal.

But, according to Rāmānuja, it is rather strange to hold that, the antecedent non-existence of *jñāna* could not be comprehended, for it is well comprehended by *jñāna* itself. The rule that *anubhūti* should be present in order to grasp its *abhāva* is a self-imposed restriction, not warranted by facts. That is, it is not a rule that *jñāna* could comprehend only objects that are present simultaneously: for, then it would become impossible for it to comprehend past and future objects. It is observed only in the case of *pratyakṣa*, which operates through sense-organs, that it grasps objects that are present at the time of its functioning. But this rule cannot be applied in the case of *jñāna* as whole; for it is observed in the case of recollection, inference or *yogipratyakṣa* that objects of different times are apprehended⁷⁸.

Another contention of the Advaitin is that as consciousness is not subject to origination, all the other *vikāra*-s also are naturally precluded in respect of it and hence it is eternal. But, according to Rāmānuja, this inference cannot be drawn as it lacks correspondence elsewhere. For instance, *prāgabhāva* which has no origination is accepted to be subject to destruction. If it is held that it is applicable only to positive entities and not to *abhāva*, still the rule fails in the case of *avidyā*, accepted by the Advaitin. That is, *avidyā*, according to *Advaita*, is not originated at a particular point of time, but still it undergoes all the *vikāra*-s and is eventually destroyed when there dawns the right knowledge. Hence non-origination cannot be cited as a cause to deduce that something is free from *vikāra*-s or that it is eternal⁷⁹.

78. ibid p.136.

79. ibid., p.141

Yet another contention of the Advaitin is that, consciousness, by virtue of being unoriginated does not admit of differentiation within itself or without⁸⁰. This again is rejected by Rāmānuja, on the ground that the distinction of consciousness from the body, sense-organs, etc., cannot be denied. Ātman, in fact is essentially differentiated from them. It is no argument to say that that differentiation is only illusory and not real, for such a distinction (as **real differentiation** and **illusory differentiation**) is untenable in the scheme of *Advaita*, because of the fact that there is no such thing as real differentiation, according to *Advaita*. What is more, observes Rāmānuja, if *avidyā* is not accepted to be really different from Brahman, then it will tantamount to saying that Brahman itself is *avidyā*.

*avidyāyāḥ ātmanah paramārthato vibhāgābhāve
sati vastuto hyavidyaiva syādātmā*⁸¹.

2.3.11 THE SELF IS THE CONTENT OF I-COGNITION

It was pointed out earlier, on the basis of several arguments, that according to *Advaita*, *ātman* cannot be the content of the I-cognition. And the Advaitic contention centered mainly on three arguments:

- (i) if the self knows itself as I, then there would arise the defect of the self itself becoming the subject as well as the object of the knowledge of I, which, however, is an impossibility;
- (ii) if the self knows itself as I, then, there will result change or *vikāra*, as knowership essentially involves change; and,

80. Loc. cit.

81. ibid., p.142

(iii) the I-cognition never continues in the states of deep-sleep and liberation, which testifies to the fact that the notion of I is not intrinsic to the self.

Actually the cognition of 'I' involves the larger question of knowership itself, and according to *Advaita*, knowership is an acquired feature and not the essential nature of the self. Thus the Advaitin contends that the I-cognition is the foremost of all *adhyāsa*-s, and it does not belong to the self.

But, according to Rāmānuja, the content of the I- cognition is the self, which is a whole and does not consist of analyzable constituents as *idam* and *anidam*. The self represented by 'I' is not illusory, but a real and an ultimate entity in itself. The Advaitin holds the subject-object combination as wholly impossible, and therefore feels that he is compelled to explain the same as consisting of two elements⁸².

According to Rāmānuja, however, it is improper to say that the 'I' is not the self, as it amounts to saying that the self is not the self. It is the nature of the self to know itself as 'I'. If release means the self free from the notion of 'I', then that would be nothing short of destroying the self itself, in which case, *mokṣa* will cease to be a desired end. One assiduously pursues all that is prescribed in scriptures with a view to attain release under the hope, "I will get removed of all the traces of pain and enjoy infinite bliss in *mokṣa*". But if the 'I' itself were to be destroyed in *mokṣa*, then it will no longer be a cherished end at all.

*nirastākhiladuhkho 'ham anantānandabhāk svarāt
bhaveyamiti mokṣārthī śravaṇādau pravartate
ahamarthavināśasācet mokṣa ityadhyavasyati
apasarpedasaumokṣakaṭhāprasthāvagandhataḥ*⁸³.

82. cf., Outlines of Indian Philosophy, pp.354-355

83. *S.B.*, I.i.1, Vol.1 (Part I) p.148

Whereas the Advaitin maintains a sharp division between the knowing subject and the object known, holding that one cannot become the other, Rāmānuja feels that it should be the other way round. The subject, without first knowing itself, cannot know something else. In fact, the notion of *svayamprakāśatva* starts with the self. The self is said to be *svayamprakāśa*, because it knows itself as I. And this aspect of the self is called *pratyaktva*, as opposed to *parāktva* in the case of external objects. *Pratyaktva* is defined as being revealed to oneself - *svasmai bhāṣamānatvam pratyaktvam*⁸⁴. And it is this characteristic that distinguishes the self from the not-self, which certainly is not due to any false identification.

The *Advaita* too, though holds the self to be *svayamprakāśa*, yet does not hold that it knows itself. But, on the other hand, it defines *svayamprakāśatva* as "revelation without any aid"⁸⁵. But according to Rāmānuja, it is meaningless to say that self-luminosity means revelation without any aid as that would need further explanation. Is it something that is revealed or the self itself?

And to whom does this revelation occur? If the term *revelation* is conceived in the ordinary parlance of the term, then being a relative term, it would necessarily involve an object and subject, for that is how it is found in common parlance. If on the other hand, it is conceived in any special sense, then, that is not warranted because, there is no vedic or classical usage to support that view.

*prakāśatvādeva kasyacideva bhavet
dipādiprakāśavat ... samvidanubhūti-
jñānādiśabdāḥ sambandhi śabdāḥ iti*

84. *S.P. on S.B.*, I.i.1, Vol.1 (Part.I) p.147

85. cf., *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, p.343.

*'sabdārtavidah. na hi lokavedayoh jānātyāder
akarmakasya akartrkasya ca prayogo
drṣṭacaraha⁸⁶.*

Hence to be the subject and the object of cognition (in the case of the I-cognition) is no contradiction at all, and it does not split the self into two, as consciousness and *antahkarana*.

The next argument is that if the self knows itself, then it will become a knower, and as knowership essentially involves change, it cannot be intrinsic to the unchanging *Ātman*. Hence this *jñātrtvā* which is illusory, rightly belongs to the changing *antahkarana*, which feature is falsely superimposed upon the self. Further, if knowership, being a form of agency (i.e., *kartṛtvā*, in the act of knowing) belongs to the self, then it will only be similar to the body and in that case, the self would lose its self-hood itself.

To Rāmānuja, however, it is just the opposite. That is *jñātrtvā* is something special to a sentient being and to postulate it to an insentient *antahkarana* goes against all logic. He says “*cetana asādhāraṇādharmaṭvāt jñātrtvasya*”⁸⁷. If *jñātrtvā* cannot be admitted to the self on the ground that it involves change, then it is all the more impossible to admit it to the *antahkarana* on several other grounds. The *antahkarana* is similar to the body in many respects like being insentient, being an effect of *prakṛti*, being *parāk*, etc., and how could something (*jñātrtvā*, in the present instance) which is not possible to the body, become possible to the *antahkarana* either?

In fact, all the reasoning that preclude knowership with respect to the body, hold equally good in respect of an

86. S.B., I.i.1, Vol.1 (Part I) p.125

87. ibid., p.158

analogous *antahkarana*, and hence *antahkarana* could never be a knower.

*yathā dehādih dṛsyatvaparāktvādihetubhiḥ
tatpratyanika draṣṭrvapratyaktvāder vivicyate
evam antahkarana-rūpa-ahaṅkaro 'pi
taddravyatvādeva taireva hetubhiḥ
tasmādvivicyate iti*⁸⁸.

2.3.12. *JÑĀTRTVĀ EXPLAINED*

The chief objection of *Advaita* against the self being viewed as a *jñāta* is that *jñātrtvā* would involve change. But, according to Rāmānuja, it is not so. *Jñātrtvā* means to be endowed with knowledge (*jñātrtvam hi jñānaguṇāśrayatvam*⁸⁹).

That is, the self, which is eternal, is ever endowed with the quality called knowledge. It is a unique *dharma* of the self, which (*dharma*) in its natural state will be all pervasive. But while the self is in bodily existence, this knowledge, called the *dharmabhūtajñāna* is subject to contraction and expansion due to *karma*. That is, while the self is confined to the body, the *dharmabhūtajñāna* operates through the sense-organs, and consequently there is expansion and contraction due to which, it is said, knowledge has arisen or knowledge is destroyed. And during such states, *jñātrtvā* involves change, as *dharmabhūtajñāna* expands and contracts. Such change however is not inadmissible, as it is in accordance with scriptural declarations.

88. Loc.cit.

89. ibid., p. 159.

Sudarśana Sūri observes here

*tādrśavikriyātmakatvām prāmanikatvāt
iṣṭamityarthah; acetanavat pariṇāmo
hi anabhyupagataḥ⁹⁰.*

Still the *dharma* remains changeless and hence there is no conflict with the *śruti*-s which declare the self to be changeless. It is on the basis of scriptural declarations that the nature of self, and of other factors are determined, and they are verified later when there actually occurs realization of the self at the state of *mokṣa*. And it is seen that scriptures declare the self not only as *jñāna*, but also as *jñāta* and the author of the *sūtra*-s expressly confirms the view in the aphorism *jñō 'ta eva*⁹¹. Hence knowership is intrinsic to the self. Still at the state of release, the *dharma* expands to the maximum, and thus there is no change in it also at that state. Thus the *nirvikāratvaśruti*-s can be taken to declare the self to be changeless at that state.

It may be noted here that when it is said that the *dharma* knows itself as 'I', it does not know itself like an object, pot, etc. But on the other hand, it is the nature of the self to be manifesting at all times as 'I'. Hence, in the case of *dharma* there is no question of change at all.

Thus *jñātrtvā*, according to Rāmānuja is an essential feature of the self.

But some Advaitins hold that *jñātrtvā* is not possible either to the changeless *ātman* or the insentient *antaḥkaraṇa*. But a unity of the two brings about it. In this connection Prof. Hiriyananda writes:

90. *S.P. on S.B.*, I.i.1, Vol.1 (Part I) p.160

91. *B.S.*, II. iii. 19.

"Thus it is only the unity of the passive *sākṣin* and the active *antahkarana* that is real for all practical purposes. That is what knows feels and wills"⁹²

But still the question remains how *jñātṛtvā* which is absent in either could arise through a union of the two. It is no argument to say that due to the association of consciousness, belonging to the self, the *antahkarana* partakes of the nature of a knower, on the analogy of an iron-rod, which by itself could not burn, but burns due to the association with heat. This is because, what is present in fire, namely, heat, could be transferred to iron; but in the case of the self, *jñātṛtvā* being not present in it could not be transferred to the *antahkarana*.

*atha agnisamparkāt ayaḥpiṇḍa auṣṇyavat
citsamparkāt jñātṛtvopalabdhiriti; naitat; samvidi
vāstava jñātṛtvā anabhyupagamādeva na
tatsamparkāt ahaṅkāre jñātṛtvam tadupalabdhir
vā⁹³.*

The third argument advanced by the Advaitin to prove that the I-cognition does not belong to the self, is that it is not found in deep-sleep and after release.

Actually deep-sleep seems to be a very mysterious state in man's life. It occurs almost daily and universally to all, but still little is known about it. It is characterized by the cessation of all knowledge, and the sense-organs including the mind cease to function during that state. Now *Advaita* contends that there is the experience of pure unsullied bliss devoid of all characterizations including even the notion of 'I' at that state, based on subsequent recollections in the form *sukhamaham asvāpsam* (I slept happily) *etāvantam kālam na kiñcidaham ajñāsiṣam*

92. Outlines of Indian Philosophy, p.343.

93. S.B., I.i.1. Vol.1 (Part I) p.161

(All this time (during sleep) I did not know anything) and *māmapyaham nō jñātavān* (I did not know even myself)⁹⁴.

According to *Advaita*, these are adequate proofs to show that the notion of 'I' does not continue during deep-sleep, and that knowership is quite extraneous to the self, and there is the experience of pure unsullied bliss at that state.

But Rāmānuja proves precisely on the basis of these recollections that, the self ever remains cognized as 'I' which continues even during deep-sleep, and that knowership is an essential characteristic of the self.

According to him, every living species is aware of itself at all times as 'I'. During deep-sleep, which is caused due to the influence of the *tamoguṇa*, there is no experience of external objects as all the sense-organs cease to function, and *dharmabhūtajñāna* which gets greatly contracted remains as a mere potency to know. Nevertheless, there continues the uniform experience of 'I', as that is how the self knows itself. In fact, the manifestation of the self itself is of the form of 'I'. But during deep-sleep, as there is no experience of anything else to contrast it from the I-cognition, the *ahampratyaya* is rather unclear, but still there never occurs its total cessation.

*tamoguṇa abhibhavāt parāgaṭha anubhava
abhāvācca ahamarthaśya viviktaśphuṭa
pratibhāsa abhāve'pi āprabodhāt ahamityekā-
kāreṇā ātmānah sphurāṇāt susuptāvapi na
ahāmbhāvavigamah⁹⁵.*

The Advaitic contention is that there is the experience of *nirviśeṣcaitanya* during deep-sleep. But there is no

94. *Pañcapādika*, pp. 96-97

95. *SB*, I.1.1, Vol 1 (Part I), p.166

recollection of such an experience, and in the absence of any other evidence to that effect, it is not proper to hold that there is such an experience. Another incompatibility is that there is no *experient* to experience such an experience, and if nobody has experienced it, there is no proof that it had actually been there. In fact, the subsequent recollection cited proves the contrary.

The recollection is of the form *sukham aham asvāpsam*. This goes only to prove that *Ātman*, by nature is blissful and is an experient. As it is impossible for the self to recollect something which it had not experienced earlier, the said recollection only proves the actual experience of bliss at that state, by the self, which would not have been possible had there been the cessation of *ahampratyaya*.

If the notion of 'I' does not continue in the state of deep-sleep, then there is no possibility on the part of one to continue one's activity left unfinished before one had gone for sleep nor is it possible to have the recollection of objects experienced prior to sleep.

Another proof set forth by the Advaitin, to establish the absence of knowership in the state of deep-sleep is recollection of the form *etāvantam kālām na kiñcit aham ajñāśisam*. According to Rāmānuja, this recollection proves exactly the opposite view, namely, that the notion of 'I' persists throughout. It does not prove the absence of *ahampratyaya*; on the other hand, it only shows the absence of experience of any external objects. It may be said that the recollection involving reference to *na kiñcit* shows the absence of every experience. But it is not correct. It is because, in that case, it would refer to the absence of *nirviśeṣcaitanya* too⁹⁶.

96. ibid., p.168

The Advaitic contention is that there is the experience of bare consciousness and absence of the notion of 'I'. But the recollection cited "I did not know anything", proves exactly the opposite. There is the continuation of the self (as I) and negation of all knowledge⁹⁷.

Yet another proof cited is the recollection of the form, *māmapyaham na jñātavān*. This apparently negates the continuation of the self during sleep. But, Rāmānuja is of the view that, though the self too seems to be negated by the word *mām*, yet the one who negates is the 'I' (*aham*), which however is involved in the recollection. In fact, the meanings of the two terms, *mām* and *aham*, need to be distinguished clearly.

The self, throughout the waking state, knows itself as associated with body and its characteristics such as the stage and class of life. This forms the content of the negation *māmapyaham na jñātavān*. And the word *aham* represents the experience, altogether, of one's own self during deep-sleep, though in an unclear form.

The point to be noted here is that, those factors alone which are not experienced due to the absence of the sense-organs are negated by the negation. That which needs no external aid for its manifestation, or, in other words, that which is self, cannot be and is never negated.

Thus *Ātman* is necessarily a knower and is always the substratum of the I-cognition. And knowership, which is innate to it, remains latent during deep-sleep and is not totally effaced out at that time.

Ātman is accepted to be self-manifest and that is possible only when it manifests itself as 'I'. And this manifestation continues even during deep-sleep.

97. Loc.cit.

*ātmane svayam avabhāsamānah aham ityeva
avabhāsata iti svāpādyavasthāsvapi ātmā
prakāśamāno 'hamityeva avabhāsata iti
siddham*⁹⁸.

Again, according to *Advaita*, release from bondage means release from the notion of 'I' too. In fact it is the basic axiom of *Advaita*, that agency, enjoyership and knowership (*kartṛtva*, *bhoktṛtva* and *pramātṛtva*) cannot be intrinsic to *Ātman*. These are sources of misery, and getting rid of them constitutes liberation.

But, according to Rāmānuja, it is not correct to hold that the *ahampratyaya* is a characteristic of the self, so that it could be segregated from it. It is the essential nature (*svarūpa*) of the self, enabling the latter to feel itself as 'I', and hence if this were to be lost in *mokṣa*, it is tantamount to accepting the destruction of the soul itself.

*yattu mokṣadaśāyām ahamartha nānuvartate iti
tadapeśalam. tathāsati ātmānāśa eva apavargah
prakārāntareṇa pratijñātah syāt, na cāhamartha
dharmamātram yena tadvigame 'pi
avidyānivṛttāviva svarūpam avatiṣṭheta; pratyuta
svarūpameva ahamartha ātmānah*⁹⁹.

The schism between *Advaita* and *Visistādvaita* lies in regard to the explanation of the self-luminosity of the self. The Advaitin holds that self-luminosity consists in mere *revelation*, which according to Rāmānuja, makes no sense. If the self is said to be *svaprakāśa*, it must be held to know itself as 'I', in accordance with what is observed during waking state. In ordinary experience, one finds that whoever knows oneself, knows one's self as 'I', and

98. ibid., p.169.

99. ibid., p.170

objects like pot etc., are not considered to be *svaprakāśa* as they do not know themselves. And as released souls are accepted to be *svaprakāśa*, it goes without saying that they are aware of themselves as 'I'. The *Upaniṣad*-s too emphasize the view set forth now.

The sage, Vāmadeva, who had had direct realization, had not shed the notion of 'I'.

*taddhītāt paśyan r̥śir vāmadevah pratipede
aham manurabhavam sūryaśca..,*¹⁰⁰.

According to *Advaita*, at the state of *pralaya*, there exists Brahman alone without a second, which is called *sat*, on the basis of the *Chāndogya* text, *sadeva somya idamagre āśit ekamevadvityam*. But even the *vyavahāra* of this non-dual Brahman involves *aham* even at that state, as evidenced by the *śruti* texts,

*hanta aham imāstisro devatāḥ*¹⁰¹.

*bahu syāṁ prajāyeya*¹⁰².

*sa iksate lokānnu śrijai iti*¹⁰³.

Again, Lord Kṛiṣṇa too, makes references to himself as *aham* even in his transcendental state:

*yasmāt kṣaram atīto aham akṣarādapi cottamah
ato asmi loke vede ca prathitah puruṣottamah*¹⁰⁴.

*aham ātma gudākeśa*¹⁰⁵.

*aham kṛiṣṇasya jagataḥ prabhavaḥ pralayastathā*¹⁰⁶,
etc.

100. *Br. Up.*, III.iv.10

101. *Ch. Up.*, VI.iii.2

102. *ibid.*, VI. ii.3.

103. *Ait. Up.*, I.1.

104. *B.G.*, XV.18,

105. *ibid.*, X.20.

106. *ibid.*, VII.6.

Thus on the basis of the triple evidence of perception, *yukti* and scriptures, it emerges that the self is essentially a knower, and knows itself as 'I', which Śrī Yāmunācārya succinctly summarizes as :

*ataḥ pratyakṣasiddhatvāt uktanyāyāgamānvayāt
avidyāyogatascatmā jñātahamiti bhāsate*¹⁰⁷.

In fact, to deny knowership at the highest state of liberation is only counter-productive and detrimental in as much as one does not even have the realization of such a liberation. In the words of Prof. G.P. Bhatt,

"If in the transcendental state, which is the realization of the highest and most cherished end of life, and which comes after the most strenuous efforts of innumerable births, and for whose sake the common pleasures of mundane life are denied by the self to itself, even the contentment of realizedness is not experienced, then any attempt to achieve this state defeats its own end. If such a state is achieved at all, the self is a loser rather than a gainer"¹⁰⁸.

2.4. NATURE OF REALITY

2.4.1 THE RĀMĀNUJA VIEW

One of the most difficult problems encountered in the scriptures is the problem of one and many because of existence of two types of *śruti*-s- the *bhedāśruti*-s and the *abhedaśruti*-s. According to *Advaita*, it is logically impossible that both could be compatible at one place. Hence in the scheme of *Advaita*, the problem of one and many is solved, as we saw, by treating the many as illusory and upholding the one as supremely real.

107. Ātmasiddhi, verse-14.

108. The Basic Ways of knowing, p.12.

In the words of Prof. S.R. Bhatt¹⁰⁹

"It (*Advaita*) finds no room for many in the unity of pure non-differentiated Brahman. To it unity defies logically all differences. Thus failing to reconcile the unity with multiplicity, it negates the latter to posit the former".

And this view of *Advaita* has led it to hold that Brahman is devoid of qualities too.

But Rāmānuja could never think of an 'oneness' in the absolute sense. What he emphasizes is that scriptures could never teach such a concept, not only because it is logically untenable but also because it runs counter to the spirit of the scriptures, taken as a whole.

Thus, according to Rāmānuja, the identity propounded in the scriptures has to be interpreted in the wake of difference expounded therein and not to its detriment. He could not accept that the *abhedaśruti*-s are more powerful than the *bhedāśruti*-s. In fact, he is totally against making a discrimination within the *śruti* texts that some are more powerful and others, less powerful.

And especially when both could be interpreted without any conflict to either, it is not proper to relegate one of them (the *bhedāśruti*-s) to a lower position. Hence the right perspective would be to treat all the *śruti*-s on an equal footing and yet resolve the apparent conflicts¹¹⁰.

This could be done only by accepting Brahman as the all - embodying principle, which, according to Rāmānuja, is the mode shown by *śruti* itself¹¹¹. That is, Brahman is one, because there is no second to it like itself.

109. Studies in Rāmānuja *Vedānta*, p.21.

110. *Vedārthasaṅgraha*, p.179.

111. *S.B.*, I.i.1, Vol.1 (Part II), p.79

But it contains the *jīva*-s and the world within itself as its *prakāra*-s. Thus the soul and the insentient matter have separate identities for themselves but not separate existence. They are realities in their own right but are always dependent upon Brahman and remain as its bodies. Brahman remains as their inner soul and controller.

Thus as Brahman is associated at all times with *jīva* and *prakṛti* (the world), the three are seen as one, keeping in view their inseparability. But the essential nature of the three are never the same and this difference, which is maintained all through, is brought out by *bhedāśruti*-s. In fact an analysis of some of the instances which portray identity seem to suggest that they do not lend credence to the Advaitic view of absolute identity.

For instance, the *Chāndogya* text, *sarvam khalu idam brahma*¹¹² says “All this (world) is Brahman”, and the complement of the sentence gives the reason why the two are said to be the same as *tajjalān iti*. It means that the “world originates from, is sustained by and lapses back into Brahman”. Thus as the world has Brahman as the only cause, it is said to be Brahman itself.

Now the Advaitin seeks to interpret this text on the basis of an illustrative example thus: due to defective eyesight, etc., one mistakes a post for a man. Subsequently when the illusion is dispelled and it is found that there is nothing but the post, there results the expression *sthanuh purusah*, which literally means “the post is a man”. Here the post is said to be a man, not in the sense that both are one and the same, but in the sense that there is the absence of the characteristic of being a post in man.

Similarly, when the *śruti* says, “All this (world) is Brahman” it seeks to convey the absence of the world in

112. Ch.Up., III.xiv.1

Brahman and not to posit any actual identity. Now it is to be noted that there is a marked difference between the supposed analogy and the analogue. When *śruti* says, "All this (world) is Brahman", it adds, "because Brahman is its cause".

In the case of *sthānuḥ puruṣaḥ*, however, no such reason is given, nor is needed, to show the identity. This is because it goes without saying that one of them is illusory, and in a stricter sense there is no identity at all between the two.

An examination of some other instances in the scriptures also confirms the above view. For instance, when identity is proposed between the *jīva* and Brahman as in *tatvamasi*, the *Upaniṣad* adduces a reason as *sanmulāssomya imāssarvāḥ prajāḥ sadāyatanaḥ satpratiṣṭhāḥ* (Oh Somya! All these beings originate from, lapse back into and are sustained by that *sat* - Brahman) *aitadātmyam idam sarvam tatsatyam sa ātmā tattvamasi* (All this world (*cit* and *acit*) has that (*sat*) as its *ātman* and hence is real and that is the (inner) soul; That thou art).

Again when enlightened souls speak from their supreme state of consciousness they fully identify themselves with Brahman, as Brahman who pervades everywhere remains within them also. They have the vision of God and they fully identify themselves with Brahman, in spite of their radical distinction (from Brahman).

For instance Prahlāda observes:

*mattassarvam aham sarvam mayi sarvam
sanātane*¹¹³.

113. V.P., I.xix.85.

(Everything originates from me, I remain as everything and everything lapses back into me)

for which he adduces the reason

' *sarvagatvāt anantasya sa eva ahamavasthitah*¹¹⁴.

(As the Lord has pervaded everywhere, He Himself remains as me too.)

The *Mahābhārata* declares that the soul and the Supreme Being are two distinct entities and yet are viewed as one, because one remains within the other (as its soul).

*anyaśca rājan sa parah anyaśca pañcavimśakah
tatsthatvāt anupasyanti hyeka eva iti sādhavaḥ*¹¹⁵.

{Oh King! that Supreme Being and the twenty fifth one (the soul) are quite different. Yet the enlightened see the two as one, as the one (*paramātman*) dwells within the other (the *jīva*).}

Thus it could be seen that the instances which portray oneness in the scriptures could not be equated to instances like *sthānuḥ puruṣaḥ*, etc. The fact of their citing a reason for viewing the world or the soul as being one with Brahman shows that they do not intend to convey the illusoriness of the world nor the absolute non-difference of the soul from Brahman.

On the other hand, an analysis of the scriptures shows that the *ekatva* contemplated in the scriptures, can be broadly brought under two divisions:

- (i) *ekatva* due to *śarīrātmabhāva*
(identity due to body-soul relation);

114. Loc.cit.

115. *Mahābhārata, Mokṣadharma*, 357.33.

and

- (ii) *ekatva* due to *kārya-kāraṇa-bhāva*
 (identity due to cause-effect relation)

In the system of Rāmānuja, these two are the most fundamental harmonising concepts. It is a fact that the *śarīrātmabhāva* is rightly acknowledged as the *pradhānapratitantrārtha* (*sui generis*) of the system, but yet both of them are so intertwined that each involves reference to the other and it is strictly not possible to segregate the two individually. As both are harmonising concepts, enabling us to maintain the oneness of Brahman, in spite of the existence of the multifarious world, both are dealt with under one head - conception of oneness.

2.4.2. CONCEPTION OF ONENESS

Earlier it was observed that there are two types of *śruti*-s, the *bhedaśruti*-s and the *abhedāśruti*-s¹¹⁶. But Rāmānuja identifies a third type of *śruti* called the *ghaṭakaśruti*, which resolves the apparent contradiction between the *bheda* and the *abhedāśruti*-s. For instance, the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, as well as the *Subālopaniṣad*-s declare the entire insentient matter and the sentient soul as forming the body of the Lord.

He who dwelling in all things;
 Yet is other than all things;
 Whom all things do not know:
 Whose body, all things are;
 Who controls all things from within;
 He is your soul; the inner-controller;
 The impeccable¹¹⁷.

116. *infra*p. 78

117. *Br. Up.*, V.vii.19
 cf. also *Sub.Up.*, VII

In the case of body and soul, they always exist as one, though their essential natures are different. This is a unique case where there are two entities and yet both exist as one and are referred to as one only. In fact, it is seen that words used to denote bodies, do also refer to souls. For instance, when it is said, "It is a cow" (*iyam gauḥ*), the word cow refers not only to the body, but also to the soul inside. However, dual number is not used, in spite of the fact that the word denotes two entities, because the two are always associated and are treated as one only, and by referring to one (the body), the other (the soul) is invariably referred to, unless otherwise intended.

Thus in ordinary experience, it is noticed that words denotative of bodies do not cease to function by merely denoting them, but also have the power to denote the corresponding souls as well. And this power is called the *aparyavasānavṛtti* or unexhausted power. Now *śruti* teaches Brahman as the inner soul of every animate and inanimate being. Hence by the same *aparyavasānavṛtti*, words denote the self of the souls - namely, Brahman also.

That is, words, which by their very nature, are indicative of the *prakāra*-s have the power to indicate the *vīśeṣya*-s as well, as their power is not exhausted merely by conveying the *prakāra*-s, as observed in the worldly usages. But the fact remains that Brahman is a *paramavīśeṣya*, and the power of words also remains unexhausted till Brahman is indicated. But as Brahman could not be known through our ordinary sources of knowledge, like *pratyakṣa* or *anumāna*, laymen do not know the fullest potency of words. Ignorant, as they are, they limit the power of words to that extent that could be known through their normal faculties of knowing because they do not have the knowledge of *Vedānta*¹¹⁸.

118. *S.B.*, II.iii.17. cf also *Vedārtusaṅgraha*, pp.41-44

It is only through the study of *Vedānta*, that one comes to ascertain the fullest power of words, and their knowledge about words, and their denotative power is completed only then¹¹⁹.

In fact, according to Rāmānuja, the entire process of creating the objects of the world, and naming them is done in such a way that the names ultimately indicate the *Paramātman*. This is dealt with in the *Tejo'dhikarana* of the *Brahmasūtra-s*¹²⁰.

2.4.3 CREATION OF FORMS AND NAMES - THE TEJO'DHIKARANA

This *adhikarana* is devoted to dispelling the *prima facie* view that Brahman is not the cause of elements like *prthivi*, *ap*, *tejas*, etc., as these are spoken in the *śruti-s* as originating only from their immediately preceding elements, and not from Brahman. This is rejected on the ground that, Brahman which remains in the form of each element, creates the subsequent elements, and it pervades all the elements. In a way, it could be said that, Brahman creates itself, and it is declared in *śruti* passages like

*tadātmānam svayamakuruta*¹²¹.

(It created itself)

And the author of the *sūtra-s* too, declares Brahman to be the material cause of the world,

*prakṛtiśca pratijñā drṣṭāntānuparodhāt*¹²².

In fact, this is one of the difficulties encountered in the scriptures. Brahman is declared to be the abode of all

119. *Vedārthaśāṅgraha*, p.44

120. *B.S.*, II.iii.2.

121. *Tai-Ānand.* VII.1

122. *B.S.*, I.iv.23.

perfections and free from any change; at the same time, it is said that it becomes both the sentient and the insentient world, meaning thereby that it is the material cause of the world. However, there is no incompatibility, according to Rāmānuja. This is because Brahman is all-pervasive, and it remains immanent in all things, due to which it could be said to be identical with all things, as well as different.

It could be said to be one with all things, in as much as it pervades all things so thoroughly, that it remains within and without everything,

*yacca kiñcit jagatyasmin dr̥ṣyate śrūyate 'pi vā
antar bahiśca tatsarvam vyāpya nārāyaṇas sthitah*¹²³.

But it is different at the same time, because, its essential nature is declared to be transcendental.

Thus Brahman is unique in that, it is in all, through all, and yet above all. Due to its immanence, it is one with all; and due to its transcendence, it is different from all. This is what seems to be the general spirit of the *Upaniṣad-s* as is evident from numerous passages, which speak of Brahman as being one with and at the same time different from the world.

That is why, creating of elements does not mean creation of something apart from Brahman, but means a change of state of a part of its body, for reality according to the *Upaniṣad-s*, is ultimately to be conceived as a triad fused into one. The three forming the triad are disparate due to their inherent characteristics, and yet one due to their inseparableness. In other words, the sentient soul and the insentient matter are so very subservient to and

123. *Tai.Nār.*, XI.15.

inseparable from Brahman, that they could be likened to qualities qualifying a substance.

Thus Brahman is said to be the material cause, though the change occurs only in the *prakāra-s* and the *svarūpa* remains unaffected. The view is very well brought out by Erie J. Lott as follows:

“In other words, it is just because the Universe is God’s body, that God, in His substantial, though not essential being, is able to form the material cause of the Universe”¹²⁴.

That is why, the creation of each subsequent element is preceded by the specific resolve, “Let me multiply myself”, by each element. The insentient elements, indeed, are incapable of thinking. This itself is a clear indication, according to the author of the *sūtra-s*, that it is not the mere elements that create the subsequent ones, but the *Paramātman* Himself, who dwells within them, as their inner soul.

*tadabhidhyānādeva tu tallīngāt sah*¹²⁵.

*abhidhyopadesācca*¹²⁶.

That is, when it is said that *tejas* created the waters. (*ap*), it is preceded by a statement that speaks of deliberation on the part of *tejas*, in order to create the waters.

*tatteja aikṣata bahu syām prajāyeyeti*¹²⁷.

which again is repeated in the next creation as

*ta āpa aikṣanta bahvyah syāma prajāyemahīti*¹²⁸.

124. God and Universe in the Vedāntic theology of Rāmānuja, p.43

125. *B.S.*, II.iii.14

126. *ibid.*, I.iv.24

127. *Ch. Up.*, VI.ii.3

128. *ibid.*, VI.ii.4

This kind of creation could not be attributed to mere insentient objects like *tejas* etc., as they cannot have the functions like deliberation, etc. Hence it has to be accepted as belonging to Brahman, which is declared to be the in-dweller of every entity in the *śruti* texts such as

yah prthivyāṁ tiṣṭhan... yo 'apsu tiṣṭhan ...

yastejasi tiṣṭhan... yo vāyau tiṣṭhan ...

ya ākāśe tiṣṭhan.....¹²⁹, etc.

The close resemblance of this with the primordial creation as declared in the earlier passage -

*sadeva somya idam agre āśīt ekameva
advitīyam; tadaikṣata bahusyāṁ prajāyeyeti tattejo
asṛjata¹³⁰*

confirms the view that Brahman indeed is the cause of each subsequent effect. But as Brahman takes the names of the subsequent *tattva*-s, it is referred to by those names themselves and not by the name "Brahman", as every term indeed refers to Brahman only in the ultimate analysis, through the *aparyavasānavṛtti* referred to earlier¹³¹.

Now an objection suggests itself: if all names are said to refer to Brahman only, then the relation of words to their respective meanings, known in our ordinary experience will be totally stultified. To this objection the author of the *sūtra*-s replies

*carācaravyapāśrayastu syāt tadvyapadeśo 'bhāktah
tadbhāvabhāvitvāt¹³².*

129. Br. Up., V.viii.7.

130. Ch. Up., VI.ii.1.

131. infra, p.84

132. B.S. II.iii. 17

The names that are employed to denote specific objects in the world, function only partially in respect of those objects and their function would be exhausted only when they denote the soul of the objects. Thus words have potencies to refer not only to the *prakāra-s*, but also to *viśeṣya-s* as well. But since *paramātman* is not known through the means of knowledge like perception and *anumāna* the unenlightened do not know that It is the ultimate *viśeṣya* of every entity. Their knowledge about the power of words is not complete. They thus use words without understanding their full significative function, breaking them mid-way, only with reference to a part of their meanings. It is only a serious study of *Vedānta* that enables one to have the knowledge of the fullest significative power of words. There will be no stultification of worldly usages in respect of their ordinary meanings; but there will only be addition of new knowledge of the significative relation of words, to the self or the soul or the *prakārin*.

The point that is of importance here is: Brahman creates the world of names and forms. Now the Upaniṣadic view is not merely that Brahman remains as the *Creator* and *Controller* of the Universe from above, but is a principle that in-dwells and pervades it and controls it from within.

The process of creation expounded in the *Upaniṣad-s* is something unique. It does not say that “Brahman creates the world”. On the other hand it states that “Brahman becomes the world”. The texts

tadaikṣata bahu syāṁ prajāyeyeti

(It reflected - let Me become manifold and precreate Myself)

*tadātmānam svayamakuruta*¹³³.

[It created itself (as the world)]

*tatsṛṣṭvā tadanuprāvisat tadanupravisya sacca tyaccābhavat*¹³⁴.

(Having created the world, and having entered into it, It became the living and the non-living beings)

confirm the above view.

And the same *Upaniṣad*-s declare Brahman to be changeless and undefiled by any of the imperfections of the world. Herein lies the clue to the Upaniṣadic conception of Reality, according to Rāmānuja. The resolve on the part of Brahman in the form 'Let Me become many' would be fully significant only when we view that Brahman itself is the world of sentient and insentient entities. Again unless Brahman is essentially different from the world, it cannot remain undefiled by the imperfections of the world. And difference and identity could be maintained, according to Rāmānuja, only by accepting the body-soul relation between Brahman on the one hand, and *cit* and *acit* on the other - the relation which is emphasised in the *Upaniṣad*-s themselves.

Thus Brahman becomes the *upādānakāraṇa* of the world, in its substantial form by being associated with matter and soul (which are in their subtle forms) and remains untainted by the evils or defects of the world in its essential form.

In fact, according to ŚrīVedānta Deśika, the causality as well as the oneness of Brahman could be maintained only in a complex form by every Vedantin and never in an

133. Tai. Ānand., VII.1.

134. ibid., VI.2,3

absolute form. It is because, it is a fact that *śruti* declares Brahman alone as being existent at the state of dissolution and that alone as the sole cause of the universe, without any external *nimittakāraṇa*. But yet every Vedāntin upholds the oneness of Brahman in its causal state in a complex form only as being associated with either *māyā* (according to Saṅkara) or *upādhi* (according to Yādavaprakāśa) or *sakti* (according to Bhāskara) or *cit* and *acit* in their subtle forms (according to Rāmānuja). Hence, in a sense everybody is only a Viśiṣṭādvaitin and nobody can maintain an absolute oneness.

māyopadhisvaśaktiyatikaritapara-
brahmamulah prapañcaḥ
yeśām te'pyadvitiyyaśrutim avitathayantyatra
tattadviśiṣṭe
aprādhānyāt tatha nah prakṛtipuruṣayoh
antarātmaprādhāne
vākye 'smiṇ sthūlaśūksmānvaya iti jagato'
*nānyabhāvopapattiḥ*¹³⁵.

(Those who hold that the world has for its cause Brahman, as associated with *māyā* or *upādhi* or *sakti* interpret those *śruti* texts that declare non-duality (of the cause) only by disregarding the particular *viśeṣana-s* associated with Brahman (considering Brahman alone as of utmost importance). The same course is open to us also. Those passages that speak of the oneness of Brahman signify Brahman who is the inner soul of *cit* and *acit* entities. Thus declarations of the oneness of the world with Brahman is justified, for, *cit* and *acit* are always associated with Brahman in their subtle or gross forms).

135. *Adhikaraṇasārāvali*, 166. cf. also *Tattvamuktākalāpa*, III.27

To sum up: according to Rāmānuja, the *śurīrātmabhāva* and the *kāryakāraṇabhāva* are two fundamental harmonising concepts, which account for unity in the wake of diversity. While *kāryakāraṇabhāva* accounts for the material causality of Brahman towards the world, thus maintaining the identity of the two, the *śarīrātma-bhāva* reconciles the changelessness of Brahman in spite of its being the material cause. It also explains how the world and the soul could be viewed as one with Brahman in spite of the specific differentiations that characterize the three.

We shall now see the interpretation of the specific scriptural passages by Rāmānuja, the general spirit of which has been dealt with above. Rāmānuja pays particular attention to those passages that are said to have Advaitic leanings and holds that no passage can ever refer to an attributeless Brahman including passages like *nirguṇam*, *niṣkriyam*, etc., which was referred to in the earlier section¹³⁶.

2:4.4. INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURAL PASSAGES

Rāmānuja's foremost conviction is that no *pramāṇa*, by virtue of being a *pramāṇa* is capable of conveying anything as free from any property¹³⁷. And it is all the more impossible that scriptures, which come under the *śabdapramāṇa*, wherein every unit (like the base and suffix) makes reference to some property (that characterises the object indicated) could ever convey an

136. infra. pp. 78-79

137. infra. p.46

138. S.B., I.i.1, Vol.1 (Part I), p.117

attributeless Brahman¹³⁸. This is the general nature of *śabdapramāṇa*. An examination of the individual passages too, strengthens this view, according to Rāmānuja.

The *Chāndogya* passage, *sadeva somya idamagra āśit ekameva advitīyam* is of particular significance, according to the Advaitin, in as much as it negates all the three kinds of distinctions in Brahman - *sajātiyabheda*, *vijātiyabheda* and *svagatabheda*, and thus establishes it as attributeless. But the passage, on the contrary, conveys just the opposite, according to Rāmānuja.

The passage cannot be held to negate distinctions in Brahman, for then it would be improper to say *agre* which means *before* (that is, at the time of dissolution).

Brahman, according to *Advaita*, is distinctionless, not at a particular point of time but at all times. And basically, in order to account for the diversity of the pleasures and pains in the world, *Advaita* too accepts the *karma*-theory, accepting the *jīva*-s and their *karma*-s as *anādi*-s, which would show that Brahman could not have been absolutely distinctionless at any time in the past. It is no argument to say that all these seeming diversities are only illusory and hence cause no harm to the non-dual character of Brahman, which remains distinctionless at the time of *pralaya*.

Hence, from the text - *sadeva somya idam agre āśit ekameva advitīyam*, it is known that there existed the factor time which is a *vijātiyabheda*, the *jīva*-s, which constitute *sajātiyabheda* and factors like omniscience, omnipotence, etc., that are necessary for the creation of the universe which constitute the *svagatabheda* in Brahman.

Thus this passage, which is designated as a *kāraṇavākya*, cannot be said to negate distinctions, as the

context does not warrant it.

The term *sat* means, “that which is capable of being known through a *pramāṇa*” and it denotes here Brahman, which remains so¹³⁹.

Though It denotes Brahman, yet as It (Brahman) happens to be portrayed as the cause of the world, the word(*sat*) conveys Brahman with all its associated factors like *prakṛti*, *jīva* and *kāla* that constitute Its body, through whose association, It becomes the cause.

The term *eva*, which has a definitive sense, could negate only that which is opposed to the meaning of the word with which it is associated. Hence *sadeva* eliminates only *asattva* and does not negate *vijātīyabheda*. Though *asattva* is a *vijātīyabheda*, yet, what is to be negated is only *asattva* in its specific sense and not as *vijātīyabheda*, in a general sense. For instance, when it is said that “He is definitely a scholar”, what is negated is the fact of his being an illiterate. The word **definitely** does not negate such things as his being a man, etc., too. Hence *sadeva* conveys Brahman with all the associated factors like *prakṛti*, etc.

The word *ekameva* conveys Brahman in Its undifferentiated condition, not differentiated into names and forms. This is because the *ekatva* spoken here speaks of oneness as opposed to the multitude referred to subsequently as *bahu syām*. This is also corroborated by the illustration cited, which says *ekena mr̥tpindena sarvān mr̥ṇmayam*. And the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* specifically states the conditions of *praṭaya* and *sṛṣṭi* as undifferentiated and differentiated states respectively.

taddhetarī tarhi avyākrtam āśit tannāmarūpabhyām

139. S.P. on S.B., I.i.1, Vol.1 (Part I), P.185.

140. Br.Up., III.iv.7

*vyākriyata*¹⁴⁰.

(It existed at that time of *pralaya* as being undifferentiated and it was differentiated by names and forms at the time of *sṛṣṭi*.)

Thus the above establishes the material causality of Brahman, for material cause is that which undergoes a change of state and becomes the effect.

*bhāvi avasthā-viśeṣavataḥ prāgavasthāyogo hi upādānatvam*¹⁴¹.

The term *advitiya* negates any other *nimittakāraṇa*, because, when there is mention of *upādānakāraṇa*, what immediately strikes the mind is the *nimittakāraṇa*. And the term precludes anything else other than Brahman itself as the *nimittakāraṇa*. What follows also confirms the same view.

The term *ekameva* speaks of an undifferentiated condition as opposed to the differentiated condition, stated in the complement of the text as *bahu syām*. So also the subsequent passage *tadaiksata... tattejo 'srjata* (It reflectsit created *tejas*) indicates that the previous term *advitiya* negates only some other auxiliary cause, as Brahman itself is spoken of as the creator.

The term *tadaiksata*, speaks of the omniscience of Brahman, *asrjata* conveys that It Itself was the *nimittakāraṇa*, *bahu syām* conveys Its *upādānatva* and the passage *anena jīvena ātmanā anupravis्या nāmcरūpe vyākaravāñi* speaks of His indwelling character.

Thus the passage *sadeva somya*, etc., could be seen to convey the causality of Brahman and Its peculiar nature of being both types of causes, which again implies Its

141. S.P. on S.B., I.i.1, Vol.1 (Part I), p.185.

infinite prowess, knowledge, etc., needed for being such a type of cause, and it is simply not possible to hold it as negating all distinctions.

Again the text *satyam jñānam anantam brahma* was interpreted by the Advaitin in a secondary sense, involving a negative way of interpretation. Accordingly, the terms *satyam*, etc., convey what Brahman is not, rather than what it is. It is *satya* not because it is constant, but because it is changeless, *jñāna*, not because it is sentient but because it is not inert (*jada*) and is infinite (*ananta*) not because it is so but because it is not finite. The advantage of interpreting this way is that Brahman is portrayed only in a negative way, thus avoiding the possibility of being viewed as being associated with any positive attributes. Another advantage is that Brahman is spoken of and yet its unspeakability is maintained. It is spoken of as what it is not and not spoken of as what it is.

But, according to Rāmānuja, it is rather strange to interpret the *śruti* text this way. He sees no reason why negative ways should be resorted to when the text itself is abundantly positive in its tenor. And what is more, the negative method of interpreting does not yield the desired result either, for what is not *jada* cannot be the same as what is not finite, and what is not finite cannot be the same as what is changeless. Each should necessarily become a distinct property and their negative character cannot strip them off of their characterisation. If that is not so then ultimately no meaning would have been conveyed by each¹⁴².

Further by adopting negative ways of interpreting, it has been tacitly admitted that interpreting the text in a positive way would entail the acceptance of these as

142. S.B., I.i.1, Vol.1 (Part I), pp.143-144

positive qualities. Now the fact that negative denials are no different from positive affirmations, shows that they very much exist as properties and the text cannot simply establish an attributeless Brahman.

The text, again it was argued, through the employment of *sāmānādhikaranya*, conveys identity. While it is true that *sāmānādhikaranya* conveys identity, it never does so, in the Advaitic sense. It is more a harmonising concept, and Rāmānuja makes immense use of the concept on several counts.

It consists in the words conveying an identical sense through different grounds. It is thus: the grounds for the use of the various words in respect of their senses are different. Yet the entity conveyed is one. And the words which carry out this function are said to be having co-ordinate relation or *sāmānādhikaranya*.

*bhinnaprvyrttinimittānām śabdānām ekasmin
arthe vṛttih sāmānādhikaranyam*¹⁴³.

Thus *sāmānādhikaranya* establishes the identity of one object associated with several aspects. Hence while it is true that identity is its spirit, difference is nonetheless impregnated in the concept. To deny all sorts of difference and to establish an absolute identity in the name of *sāmānādhikaranya* would finally result in giving up the concept of *sāmānādhikaranya* itself.

Hence *sāmānādhikaranya* rather emphasises *satya*, *jñāna*, etc., as positive aspects of Brahman and establishes Brahman as the one that possesses these qualities. This is the significance of the concept, and it would be meaningful

143. ibid., p.191.

only in the above sense.

Another contention referred earlier is that the term *ananta*, denies every type of limitation caused in the case of Brahman and it includes the limitation caused due to objects too, which is known as *vastuparicchedarāhitya*. That is, Brahman is said to be infinite or unlimited, and if there is an object other than Brahman, then Brahman will have to be limited to that extent. As Brahman is stated to be unlimited, there can be no limitation caused by objects. And this means that the objects of the world do not really exist, but only appear to be so.

But, to Rāmānuja, this *vastuparicchedarāhitya* is another concept that further adds to the glory of Brahman, while the Advaitic interpretation is simply mars the spirit of the entire concept.

That is, even according to *Advaita*, *desaparicchedarāhitya* is interpreted as spatial unlimitedness and *kālaparicchedarāhitya* as temporal unlimitedness. That is, Brahman is unlimited spatially as well as temporally which means that Brahman is all-pervasive and eternal. In these cases, they would not mean that space and time themselves are illusory but would only mean that Brahman is not subject to the limits caused by these two. In the same way, the interpretation of the concept of *vastuparicchedarāhitya* will have to fall in line with the interpretation of the concepts of *deśa* and *kalaparicchedarāhitya*, in which case alone the greatness of Brahman would be fully brought out. That is, *vastuparicchedarāhitya* means that Brahman is not limited by the objects of the world in spite of their real nature.

Further, to say that Brahman would be limited to that extent to which an object is present, would in fact come under *deśapariccheda*, and hence *vastupariccheda* has to

be something different. It is thus; each object of the world possesses a specific configuration and one object does not become another. That is, a pot is a pot and not a cloth and also vice-versa. But in the case of Brahman this is not the case, for Brahman has become every object of the world as has been set forth earlier¹⁴⁴. And words indicative of every object indicate Brahman also, which pervades the universe both from within and without¹⁴⁵.

Thus Brahman is not limited by the objects of the world, as it remains as every object pervading each one; and this is what is known as *vastuparicchedarāhitya*. Hence, this concept, contrary to proving the illusoriness of objects, establishes their reality more firmly.

According Rāmānuja, the texts that expressly negate all *guna*-s like *nirguṇam*, *nirañjanam*, *niṣkalam*, *niṣkriyam*, *śāntam*, etc., too, are incapable of establishing an attributeless Brahman. This is because it is simply not possible that there could exist a thing without properties and the proposition goes counter to many other passages which extol the glories of Brahman stating them to be natural to it:

*pārasya śaktih vividhaiva śrīyate svābhāvīkī jñānabhalakriyā ca*¹⁴⁶.

Now there is an apparent contradiction between the two texts (i.e., *nirguṇa* and *saguṇa*) and it is this contradiction that leads us, according to Advaita, to uphold those texts that deny qualities as more powerful and the others as less powerful, thus being over-ruled by the former.

144. *infra. pp. 89-90*

145. *Tai.Nār*, XI.5.

146. *Svet.Up.*, VI.8.

147. *B.S.S.B.*, III.ii.14

The *saguṇaśruti*-s refer to Brahman with qualities, and they are intended for meditative worship¹⁴⁷, while the *nirguna* texts have no function other than negating all characteristics. Further, the *nirgunaśruti*-s in order to negate qualities in Brahman necessarily stand in need of *saguṇaśruti*-s, as they alone provide qualities in respect of Brahman. Hence the *saguṇaśruti*-s operate prior to the *nirgunaśruti*-s. The latter being subsequent (*para*) are powerful on the basis of *apacchedanyāya*¹⁴⁸.

According to Ramanuja, however, there is absolutely no conflict between the two types of texts, as the content of each one is different. While the *nirgunasruti*-s negate all those that are inauspicious and imperfect in the case Brahman, the *saguṇasruti*-s speak of all the auspicious and perfect qualities in It and as such there is no conflict between them. This type of reconciliation is shown by the text

*apahatapāpmā vijaro vimṛtyuh... satyakāmaḥ
satyasaṅkalpah*¹⁴⁹.

which negates all empirical qualities and specifies the presence of extra-empirical qualities like *satyakāmatva* and *satyasaṅkalpatva* with respect to Brahman.

Further, there is a maxim that a general rule becomes inapplicable when there is a specific one; and this is known as the *utsarga-apavāda-nyāya*.

For example, the *śruti* text - *nahimṣyāt sarvā bhūtāni* prohibits the act of causing injury to any being. This is a general rule. And the text - *vāyavyam śvetam ālabheta bhūtikāmaḥ* prescribes the offering of a sacrificial animal at a sacrifice. Now the general rule is superseded by the specific one, and hence the former must be understood in

148. infra. p. 31

149. *Ch. Up.*, VIII.i.5

a restricted sense, namely, that, one should not cause injury to any being excepting in the case of sacrifice.

On the basis of application of this maxim, we have to conclude that the *nirgunaśruti*-s which refer to the negation of *guna*-s without exception must be viewed as negating only those *guna*-s which are different from those that are specified in the *śruti* itself¹⁵⁰.

The Advaitin seeks to interpret the *nirguna* and the *sagunaśruti*-s on the basis of *apacchedanyāya*, referred to earlier¹⁵¹. But, according to Rāmānuja, this maxim will not be applicable here on the following ground: *appacchedanyāya* is applicable only in those cases where the relation of antecedence and subsequence between two senses conveyed by two different texts is not a fixed one. In the example cited earlier, it is not fixed that the *udgātā* shall let loose the waist-cloth of the one in front, prior to the *pratihartā* doing so. There the text that prescribes expiation for that which occurs accidentally later becomes powerful. Here in the case of *saguna* and *nirguna* texts the relation of antecedence and subsequence is unalterably fixed and so the *apacchedanyāya* cannot be applied.

Thus the *apacchedanyāya* cannot find application here, as conditions prevailing at the present instance are quite different from the place at which the maxim is derived, and as such it cannot be invoked to settle disputes of the present sort¹⁵².

Hence as shown above, the *nirguna* texts have to be taken to negate all *guna*-s other than those specifically

150. S.P. on Ś.B., I.i./I. Vol.1 (Part I), pp.194-195

151. infra. pp.29-31

152. S.P. on Ś.B., I.i.1, Vol..1 (Part I), pp.194-195.

ordained with respect to Brahman; on the basis of *utsargāpavādanyāya*.

It emerges from the foregoing discussion that the *nirgunaśruti*-s are to be understood as negating the qualities other than those mentioned by the *sagunaśruti*-s in respect of Brahman by applying the *utsargāpavādanyāya*.

2.4.4.1. PASSAGES THAT NEGATE DUALITY – EXEGESIS OF SUDARŚANA SŪRI

According to Advaita, the texts that speak of identity of the *jīva* with Brahman, and those that negate duality, and also the texts that convey that perception of duality would lead to incessant bondage force us to hold Brahman as free from duality of every form.

The texts like -

*neha nānāsti kiñcana; mr̥tyoṣsamṛtyumāpnoti
ya iha nāneva paśyati*¹⁵³.

yatra hi dvaitamiva bhavati taditara itaram paśyati

*yatra tvasya sarvamātmaivābhūt tatkena kam
paśyet*¹⁵⁴

are clear enough in themselves and leave one in no doubt regarding the fact that Brahman is free from difference of every kind.

Rāmānuja, holds that it is a fact that the scriptures negate duality. But it should not be supposed that they negate everything apart from Brahman. On the other hand, the negative texts convey this much that there is no entity which is not an effect of Brahman or which does not have

153. *Br. Up.*, VI.iv.19.

154. *ibid.*, VI.v.15.

Brahman as its self.

The following are the points that need to be carefully considered, according to Śrī Sudarśana Sūri:

śruti sets forth Brahman as devoid of all despicable qualities and as a repository of all virtues and auspicious attributes. Hence there can be no identity of Brahman of this nature with the world which is insentient and is associated with evil. It may be argued that the world is only illusory and so when it is said that the world is identical with Brahman, it only means that the world has no independent existence apart from Brahman. But the question remains whether the world is to be got rid of or not. If not, then all the texts that prescribe the means of getting rid of the world will be rendered futile. If it has to be got rid of, then its association with Brahman has to be admitted, and, this would militate against the passages that declare Brahman to be free from all imperfections.

Further the creation of the world is said to proceed according to the will be Brahman in the text - *bahu syām*. Now this would amount to Brahman acquiring all the evils of the world through its own will, and, this a *sarvajñā* would certainly avoid.

And Brahman is declared as *sarvajñā* in texts like *yah sarvajñāḥ sarvavit*¹⁵⁵ etc. It is no argument to say that this omniscience itself is a product of *avidyā* and as such it is possible even for a *sarvajñā* to create illusorily a world, with all the attendant evils, because knowledge, etc., of Brahman are declared to be natural - *svābhāviki*, and also as real, as "*tā īme satyāḥ kāmāḥ*"¹⁵⁶. Hence *sarvajñatva* cannot be said to be a product of *avidyā* and it is not possible for a *sarvajñā* to create a world full of miseries,

155. *Mund. Up.*, I.i.10

156. *Ch. Up.*, VIII.iii.1

as it would result in Brahman itself getting associated with evil. Further, it is stated by the Advaitin that *avidyā* which is the root-cause of all evil, gets itself associated with Brahman. Even granting that, it must be possible for the omnipotent Brahman whose will according to the *Upaniṣad*-s would never remain unfulfilled, to get itself rid of *avidyā*. The *śruti* emphatically declares Him to be all-powerful, that too inherently, as in the text -

*parā asya śaktih vividhaiva śrūyate svabhāviki*¹⁵⁷.

(His supreme power, which is “natural” to Him is said to be of numerous forms).

Hence it will be contradictory to say that Brahman is inherently omniscient and omnipotent, and yet becomes “ignorant” and remains in association with *avidyā*, which needs to be got rid of.

If it is maintained that there is no such contradiction, for both are accepted on the authority of *śruti* texts, then, on the same lines it could be argued that there is no contradiction between texts that speak of eternity as well as non-eternity of the soul, of *ākāśa*, etc.

That is, one text of the *Upaniṣad* states *jīva* to be subject to origination and destruction:

*vijñānaghana eva etebhyo bhūtebhyah
samutthāya tānyevanuvināśyati*¹⁵⁸

(The *jīva* called *vijñānaghana* arises from the elements and gets destroyed along with them)

Another passage declares him to be uncreated and

157. *Svet.Up.*, VI.8.

158. *Br.UP.*, IV.iv.12

159. *Kath.Up.*, II.18.

indestructible.

*na jāyate mriyate vā vipaścit*¹⁵⁹.

(The soul neither gets born nor dies).

Similarly *ākāśa* is declared to be eternal at one place as

*vāyuśca antarikṣam caitadamṛtam*¹⁶⁰.

(*vāyu* and *ākāśa* are immortal)

and at another, it is said to be originated from Brahman, referred to as Ātman as in

*ātmānā ākāśas sambhūtaḥ*¹⁶¹

(the *ākāśa* originates from the *ātmān*)

Now, in instances like these it could be seen that *śruti* speaks in the most conflicting terms and yet, since both aspects are conveyed by *śruti* itself, one has to accept that there is no contradiction between them.

The result will be that, if everything is accepted as declared in the *śruti*, then there need be no inquiry into the import of the *Upaniṣad*-s at all¹⁶².

In the light of the above discussions, both difference and non-difference can also be accepted as being without any contradiction.

It is to remove the apparent contradiction that one is accepted as illusory and another real by the Advaitin. But since it has been proved that there is no contradiction, such

160. *Br.Up.*, IV.iii.3.

161. *Tai. Ānand.*, I.1.

162. *S.P. on S.B.*, I.i.1, Vol.1 (Part I), p.203.

a division need not be accepted, with the result that difference too will have to be viewed as real.

It is the above difficulties that forces one to accept that there does exist contradiction among the *śruti* texts. The following also are instances where there is contradiction: that is, the text

*mṛtyoṣa mṛtyumāpnoti ya iha nāneva paśyati*¹⁶³

(one who sees duality, as it were, is eternally riveted to bondage)

declares the notion of difference as the cause of bondage. Some other texts such as

*prthagātmānām̄ preritāram̄ ca matvā
jūṣṭastateṣṭena amṛtatvam̄ eti*¹⁶⁴.

(knowing the soul and its controller to be distinct, the soul pleases the supreme self and thus attains immortality), and

*jūṣṭam̄ yadā paśyat�anyamīśam̄ asya mahimānamiti
vītaśokah*¹⁶⁵

(when the soul meditates upon God who is gratified by the performance of karma, then it becomes free from misery and becomes God-like)

speak of the cognition of difference to be the means to release.

It cannot be said that these are only re-statements of what is already known in our worldly experience; for, the distinction between the soul and the supreme Brahman is not something that could be known in ordinary

163. *Br.Up.*, Vi.iv.19.

164. *Śvet.Up.*, I.6.

165. *Mund.Up.*, III.i 1.

experience.

It may be said that though such a distinction could not be known in ordinary experience, yet difference as a concept is well known in the world, which is re-stated in order that it may be negated. But in that case, non-difference also is known in our worldly experience itself as in instances like *so'yam devadattah*, etc. Hence the Upaniṣadic texts that speak of non-difference also will have to be admitted as re-statements. If it is said that such a non-difference is known, but non-difference between the soul and Brahman is not known is our worldly experience then this argument would be equally applicable in the case of difference between soul and Brahman also.

Another objection could be that *śruti* teaches difference only for purposes of meditation and it is not to be taken as a statement of fact. But this cannot be maintained; for, those very passages declare the notion of difference as a means to liberation. It is only true knowledge that could bring about liberation and not false knowledge. And so knowledge of difference cannot be false.

It is also not proper to hold that just because difference is taught for the purpose of meditation, it is false, for even non-difference has been taught for the purpose of meditation as in

*atha yo'nyāṁ devatāṁ upāste anyo'sau
anyo'hamasmīti na sa veda, ātmetyeva
upāśīta*¹⁶⁶

(one who meditates upon the deity considering oneself as different from that, does not know the truth; meditate (upon it) as one's own self.)

Hence by the same logic non-difference will have to

166 *Br Up*, III.iv 10

be accepted as false, in which case difference will become real.

It may be contended that scriptures teach non-difference like assertive propositions without there being any injunction to meditate so, and hence it cannot be held to be false. But the same explanation will be applicable in the case of difference also.

The texts like -

*kṣaram pradhānam amṛtākṣaram harah
kṣarātmanau iśate deva ekaḥ*¹⁶⁷

*jīvajīvau dvau ajau iśanīśau*¹⁶⁸

etc., teach difference as a matter of fact and not with an injunction to meditate so. Hence that also is valid and hence is not false.

It may still be contended that non-difference alone is real, as liberation is stated to be non-difference between the true nature of *jīva* from Brahman. But it must be noticed that difference too is taught at the state of liberation and so that too must be taken as real.

Hence it is not proper to hold that difference is false by virtue of its being enjoined for purposes of meditation.

It is thus clear that the negation of duality is not meant in a general sense, but it is exclusively related to that duality which is opposed to non-difference that is enjoined. That which is specifically taught, cannot be negated.

As explained earlier, *śruti* sets forth the non-difference of the universe from Brahman through cause-effect relation and body-soul relation. Hence Rāmānuja states that negation of duality refers only to *duality* that is opposed

167. *Svet.Up.*, I.10

168. *ibid.*, I.9

to such non-difference.

*kṛṣṇasya jagato brahmakāryatayā
tadantaryāmikatyā ca tadātmakatvena aikayāt
tatpratyanika nānātvam pratiṣidhyate. na
punah bahusyām prajāyeya iti
bahubhavanasaṅkalpapūrvakam brahmaṇo
nānātvam śrutiśiddham pratiṣidhyata iti*¹⁶⁹.

The purport of the negation of duality, according to Rāmānuja, is this: the objects of the world are taken to be independent. But it is not so. Being the effects of Brahman, they are dependent upon it. A cause and its effect are not two different entities; on the other hand, the effect is the same as the cause with a different configuration. The world is said to be one with Brahman, in the sense that it depends upon Brahman - its sole cause. So the notion that the objects of the world are independent and self-sustained is false knowledge, and this is negated in passages like *neha nānā'sti kiñcana*, etc. These texts are, therefore, not meant to negate the manifoldness in Brahman which is said to proceed after Brahman's resolve to become many as "bahusyām".

To admit the illusoriness of such a creation on the ground that duality is negated, defies all logic, for *śruti*, after teaching something totally unknown through any other source, cannot itself stultify that¹⁷⁰.

To sum up: the negation of duality in the scriptures refers to views that hold the world consisting of matter and souls to be independent and self-sustained and not *difference* in general. This is because the distinction between God, soul and matter which is clearly expounded in the *śruti* itself cannot be stultified.

169. *S.B.*, I.i.1, Vol.1 (Part I), pp. 204-206.

170. *ibid.*, p.206.

God, soul and matter are distinct and fundamental realities. Ultimate Reality cannot be divided into higher and lower Brahman, nor can the Ultimate of philosophy be viewed as different from the God of Religion.

Though the three are distinct in themselves, yet as matter and soul remain as totally inseparable from and dependent upon Brahman, the three are viewed as one. Thus

“Rāmānuja solves the problem of one and many not by denying many and affirming one nor by denying one and affirming many, but by making many the predicate of one. As a matter of fact, one and many had never posed any problem to him, because he starts with the position that one by its very nature or immanent necessity, is impregnated with the many”¹⁷¹

In the final analysis, as observed by Prof. S.R. Bhatt,

“Rāmānuja is as emphatic as the Advaitin in declaring that there is nothing other than Brahman, but adds that by ‘other’ he means heterogeneous differences only and not the internal ones. The absolute of Rāmānuja is a synthesis, which does not deny differentiations but expresses itself through them only. It is a whole that does not deny its parts, a substance that does not oust its attributes, a ground that does not negate its consequent, an integrity that does not shut itself of fullness”¹⁷².

171. Studies in Rāmānuja Vedānta, p.25.

172. Loc.cit.

CHAPTER III

THE NATURE OF THE SOUL

3.0 INTRODUCTION

Barring the *cārvaka* school, every school of Indian thought is oriented towards *mokṣa*, which is defined as a state free from the trammels of *samsāra*, or trans-migratory existence. It is in this context that the discussion regarding the nature of *jīva* or the soul becomes significant as the concept of *mokṣa* is relevant only in the case of *jīva*. The schools that are oriented towards *mokṣa* admit that the suffering experienced in the state of transmigration is not natural to the soul but is due only to external factors; and every soul is capable of completely liberating itself forever from all the evils of worldly existence. Thus while the systems barring the *cārvaka* agree that there exists a soul apart from the physical body, they differ in regard to the essential nature of the soul.

Rāmānuja's view of the soul proceeds on the basis of the refutation of the views of other systems which may be summarised as follows:

3.1 THE SĀNKHYA VIEW

There are only two categories according to the *Sāṅkhya* school - the *prakṛti*, which is the cause of the world and the souls called *puruṣa*-s. The soul is many in number and is all-pervasive. It is without parts and qualities and of the form of consciousness. It does not have any inherent agency though it is an enjoyer. Agency

belongs to the *buddhitattva*, which is an evolute of *prakṛti*. Though the soul is of the form of knowledge, it is not a knower. Knowership belongs to *buddhi*. It is because of the non-discrimination between the *buddhitattva* and the soul, the characteristics of *buddhi* appear in the soul and sentience which is the essential nature of the soul appears in *buddhi*. As a result, there arises the false knowledge of the form “I am a knower”, “I am an agent”, etc. It is due to this false knowledge that the soul undergoes bondage, as it were. And the sole means to liberation is the knowledge of discrimination between *prakṛti* in its unevolved and evolved states and of *puruṣa*.

3.1.1 REFUTATION OF THE SĀṄKHYA VIEW

The *Sāṅkhya* view is not sound, as according to it, the *puruṣa* is said to possess conflicting features. It is said to be a witness, a knower and an enjoyer². It is admitted at the same time to be changeless, free from agency and free from miseries - *kevala*³. But it is not possible to be a knower without involving change. Further agency and enjoyership always go together, and it is not possible to be an experient without being an agent. Again, the *Sāṅkhya*-s state that the *prakṛti* acts in order to liberate the *puruṣa*.

puruṣavimokṣanimittam tathā pravrittih pradhānasya⁴

But they admit that the *puruṣa* never undergoes bondage and it is only *prakṛti* which is in bondage and is also liberated:

1. S.K, 2
2. ibid., 17,19
3. ibid., 19.
4. ibid., 57

*tasmānna badhyate 'ddhā na macyate nāpi
 samsarati kaścit
 samsarati badhyate macyate ca nānāśrayā prakṛtiḥ⁵*

Further they state that there occurs false identification of the features of *prakṛti* in the *puruṣa* and also *vice versa*. But this is not possible. It must be ascertained as to whom does this false identification occur. It cannot occur in the case of *prakṛti*, because it is insentient, and false identification is a sentient act. And it cannot occur to *puruṣa* either, for he is said to be changeless. Moreover, false identification is said to occur merely because of the proximity (*sannidhi*) of *prakṛti* to *puruṣa*. But as both are admitted to be eternal and also all-pervasive, proximity between them also is eternal, with the result that there will never be release for *puruṣa*⁶.

3.2 THE NYĀYA-VAIŚEṢIKA VIEW

The *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika*-s, like the *Sāṅkhya*-s, admit the soul to be many in number and also all-pervasive in size. They, however, differ from the *Sāṅkhya*-s in admitting the soul to be essentially insentient but as acquiring sentience adventitiously. The soul, according to them, is all-pervasive. It is because, out of the three possible alternatives, this alone seems to be the most satisfactory one. The three alternatives are : the soul should be either atomic or of intermediate size or of infinite size (*vibhu*). Of these, the first alternative is not possible, for in that case it will not be possible to account for the feelings of pleasure and pain experienced by the soul throughout the body. That is, if the soul is atomic in size it will be located in one place in the body. In that case, it will not be possible

5. ibid., 62

to account for the feeling of pain caused due to the pricking of a thorn in the leg and of pleasure derived from the smearing of sandal paste in the chest, at the same time. The body itself, being insentient cannot have the feelings. Hence the first alternative cannot be adopted.

The second alternative too is logically untenable. That is, if the soul is accepted to be of limited size, that is, neither atomic nor all pervasive, then two alternatives present themselves. It can be of fixed size or of variable size. If it is of fixed size as of the size of a sheep (say), then when it happens to abide in the body of an elephant in its next birth in accordance with its *karma-s*, then it cannot have the feelings of pleasure and pain in those parts of the body which it does not pervade. On the other hand, if its size is that of an elephant and if it is associated with the body of an ant, then a large part of it will remain outside the body and this will rather be a strange position. These difficulties suggest that the soul cannot be viewed as having a limited but fixed size⁶. The other alternative is that the soul has a limited but a variable size. This, in fact, is the view of the *Jaina-s*. This position, of course, obviates the above difficulties. It is because the soul, being variable, can expand or contract and adjust itself to whichever body it is associated with, in each birth. But the difficulty in regard to this position relates to the factor of change, which the soul is said to undergo. The *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika-s*' objection against this view is that if the soul is subject to change, then it will be subject to destruction as well, for change and eternity cannot go together. And acceptance of the soul as one subject to destruction would render moral and ethical values and also philosophical pursuits, futile. Thus,

6. S.B., II.ii.9.
7. ibid., II.ii.32

as the soul cannot be of either atomic size or of some finite size, it has to be accepted as infinite.

The above view of the *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika*-s has forced them to admit that the soul cannot be inherently a knower. This is because, if the soul were inherently a knower, then being all-pervasive it will have to know all things that happen at all places even without the aid of sense-organs. But this is not found in experience. The fact that the soul is not inherently a knower is advocated by the scriptures too. The soul is declared to be without any sentience during deep-sleep and at the state of liberation. The following text states that deep-sleep is characterised by absence of knowledge :

*nāha khalvayamevam sampratyātmānam jānāti;
no eva imāni bhūtāni*⁸

(The soul in the state of sleep does not have knowledge of itself, of the form “I exist now”, nor does it know other things.)

And the text, *na pretya samjñā’sti*⁹ conveys the sense that there is no consciousness in the soul after the fall of the body, immediately preceding liberation¹⁰.

Thus it is concluded that the soul is insentient by itself and is infinite in size. Sentience is only adventitious. *Mokṣa* constitutes release from all bondage when there is cessation of all knowledge, and, the soul, then remains in its natural state of insentience.

8. *Ch. Up.*, VIII.xi.2

9. *Br. Up.*, VI.vi.12.

10. *S.B.*, II. iii. 19.

3.2.1. REFUTATION OF THE *NYĀYA-VAIŚEṢIKA* VIEW

Rāmānuja holds that the view that the soul is inherently insentient is opposed to experience as well as scriptures. The nature of the soul is such that it is always manifest to itself as ‘I’, which itself is a form of knowledge, and hence it can never be said to be without sentience.

It is undisputable that the soul is always aware of itself during the waking state. The *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika*-s, however, have sought to justify the view that the soul is insentient, as they hold that consciousness does not inhere in it during deep-sleep and in the state of liberation.

It has already been pointed out that the soul remains conscious even during deep-sleep¹¹. Hence the inherently conscious nature of the soul cannot be denied on the basis of deep-sleep.

Further the fundamental position of the author of *Brahmasūtra*-s is the *satkāryavāda*, according to which, what is not already existent could not be newly created. Hence even during deep-sleep the soul does remain associated with consciousness which, however is in a latent form. And the passage *nāha khalvayam* etc., referred to earlier states this much only, namely, knowledge in the state of deep sleep is contracted so much that it can as well be said that it does not exist. This text does not state that knowledge is lost in that stage. We have to interpret this passage in that light only, as the text such as

*vijñatāram are kena vijānīyāt*¹²

*esa hi drāṣṭa śrotā ... vijñānatāmā puruṣah*¹³

11. infra pp. 73-75

12. *Br. Up.*, VI.v.15.

13. *Pra. Up.*, IV 9.

and the like affirm that the characteristic of being a knower is the essential nature of soul. Hence there is no reason to hold that knowledge ceases to exist during the state of deep-sleep.

The passage, *na pretya samjnā asti*, which has been cited as an authority in respect of the view that there is cessation of knowledge in the state of liberation, does not at all state that there is no knowledge in the state of liberation. It only aims at contrasting the state of the soul at the time of the release with the state of bondage set forth in the previous passage -

*etebhyo bhūtebhayah samutthāya tānyevānuvinasyati*¹⁴

This passage refers to the false knowledge which consists in mistaking the body for the soul and which results in viewing the soul to be subject to birth and death that are related to body only. And the succeeding text, *na pretya samjnāq asti*, states that in the state of liberation the soul does not have the false cognition of the body as the soul.

And this text does not at all state the absence of knowledge at the state of release. This view is reconfirmed in the *Chāndogya* passage -

*na paśyo mr̥tyum paśyati na rogam nota duḥkhatām sarvam ha paśyah paśyati sarvam āpnoti sarvaśah*¹⁵

{The released soul no more “sees” (suffers) death, disease or misery. It “sees” (enjoys) all and attains anything from anywhere}

It is evident from the above passage that there is knowledge at the state of liberation and also absence of

14. *Br. Up.*, IV.iv.12.

15. *Ch. Up.* VII.xxvi.2.

false knowledge that characterizes bondage. Thus, the passage *na pretya samjñāsti*, refers only to the absence of false knowledge at the state of liberation and not knowledge in general.

Further the *Nyāya* view that the souls are many in number and also all-pervasive leads to several difficulties. In the first place, the *Nyāya* school has defined all-pervasiveness as contact with all *mūrti padāratha*-s. According to this definition a soul could be all-pervasive only when it is in contact with every body and every mind. And this would result in the experience by one particular soul, of pleasures and pains that are present in other souls too. It might be said that the experience of pleasures and pains is exclusively related to a particular soul based upon the merits and demerits of that soul. So the argument that there would result the experience by one particular soul of pleasures and pains that are present in other souls, too is not correct.

The above contention does not hold good. It is because merits and demerits could be acquired by a soul only by performance of prescribed deeds and by the avoidance of interdicted actions. The latter can be carried out only when there is interaction of mind with the soul. And there cannot be any exclusive relation between one mind and one soul. It is because the all-pervasiveness of the soul implies its relation to every mind. As such, any action performed or avoided by a soul with the interaction of the mind would give forth merits and demerits, and these would be common to every soul. Hence there would be the contingency of the experience by one particular soul of pleasure and pain that are present in other souls too. Hence the *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* view that the souls are all-pervasive is not sound¹⁶.

16. S.B., II.iii. 32.

3.3 THE ADVAITA VIEW

The basic tenet of *Advaita* is the absolute oneness of the Ultimate Reality. The scriptures coupled with reasoning show that Reality cannot be manifold. Accordingly the manifold souls, as revealed in our ordinary experience, cannot be real as such, but are only appearances of Brahman - the only Reality. It is due to the association of *avidyā*, which is indeterminable either as real or as an absolute nothing, that the partless Brahman appears as bound souls; and the state of being a soul is decidedly false. Hence the *jīva*-s are ultimately none but Brahman even in their conditioned state and are not different from it; nor are they independent realities in themselves.

An analysis of some of the Upaniṣadic texts and also reasoning go to confirm the above position. The soul has to be either different or non-different from Brahman. The other alternative (i.e., being different and also non-different, simultaneously) is not possible because that would involve contradiction¹⁷. Of these two, the first alternative is not possible on the following grounds:

The passages such as

*sadeva somya idamagra āsit*¹⁸.

*ātmaivedam sarvam*¹⁹

*brahmaivedam sarvam*²⁰.

*idam sarvam yadayamātmā*²¹.

*nānyo 'to 'sti draṣṭā*²²

*nānyo 'to 'sti draṣṭr*²³

17. *S.B.*, i.iv.20-22.

18. *ibid.*, VII.ii.1

19. *Ch.Up.*,VI.ii.1

20. *Nr.Tāp.Up.*,VII.3

21. *Br.Up.*,VI.v.7.

22. *ibid.*, V.vii.27

23. *ibid.*, V.viii.10

and the like, declare the identity between the soul and Brahman.

And other passages like

*anyo 'śavanyo 'hamasmīti, na sa ithā
paśuh²⁴
mrtyoh sa mrtyumāpnoti ya iha nāneva
paśyati²⁵.*

etc., disapprove of the vision of duality.

Hence it has to be admitted that according to the *Upaniṣad*-s, *jīva*-s and Brahman are essentially one, or more strictly, non-different from each other.

Further if we subscribe to the view that the soul is different from Brahman, then we would be forced to admit that liberation is non-eternal²⁶. It is because if difference is admitted between the two, then *mokṣa* will have to be admitted as being attained through the performance of some activity by the *jīva*, which will render it non-eternal. So it is not possible to hold *jīva* to be different from Brahman. As has already been pointed out, there cannot be difference - cum - non-difference between the two. Hence the two must necessarily be viewed as one and the same in their essential nature.

The seeming difference between the two and the infinite number of souls that come within the range of one's experience are due to Brahman's association with the indeterminable *avidyā*. It is because of the latter, that Brahman sees multiplicity within itself and attains to the state of innumerable bound souls.

24. ibid., III.iv.10

25. ibid., VI.iv.19

26. *B S.S.B.*, I.iv.22

THE NATURE OF THE SOUL

Thus the soul in its true nature is pure consciousness, though its state of being a soul (that is, *jīvatva*) is only superimposed due to *avidyā*. And *jīvatva* is, therefore, illusory.

The soul, thus, in the ultimate analysis, is not a single indivisible whole, but a complex entity, that is, a blend of pure consciousness and *antahkarana*, a product of *avidyā*²⁷. And this views provides the basis for reconciling some of the seeming contradictions found in the *śruti* as well as in experience.

The *śruti* declares the soul to be eternal at some places and non-eternal at others. The *Muṇḍakopanisad* for instance, states that the souls are subject to creation and destruction just like sparks of fire emanating from a fire-ball.

*yathā sudīptat pāvakāt visphulingah
sahasrasah̄ prabhavate śarūpah
tathāksarāt vividhah̄ somya bhāvāh
prajāyante tatra caivāpiyanti²⁸.*

But some others texts, like

*sa va esa mahānajātmā 'jaro 'mrto 'bhayo
brahma²⁹.*

*na jāyate mṛiyate vā vipaścit*³⁰

etc., state that it is neither created nor destroyed but is eternal. Now the fact that *jīva* consists of two components - the non-eternal *antahkarana* and the eternal consciousness - explains both the above declarations. It is

27. cf., Outlines of Indian Philosophy, pp.342-343.

28. *Mund. Up., II.i.1.*

29. *Br. Up.*, VI.iv.25

30. *Kath. Up.*, II. 18

said to be non-eternal and subject to creation and destruction, on the basis of the non-eternal nature of one of its components, namely, the *antahkarana*³¹. And it is declared to be eternal because it is non-different from Brahman and the difference is due to *avidyā*.

Further our experience shows all the objects of the world as objects known and the souls as knowers. Thus in all instances of knowing the soul remains as the subject as in "I know the pot" etc. But in the instance of the soul knowing itself as "I know myself" it remains as the subject as well as the object in the act of knowing, and this is a seeming contradiction. The contradiction, however, can be reconciled if we adopt the above view on the nature of the soul. The soul being Brahman, is of the form of pure knowledge and hence could never become the object of another knowledge. Hence what is known as 'I' in the 'I-cognition' is the insentient component, namely, the *antahkarana*³². In fact being a subject is also not natural to the soul; for, being pure Brahman, it cannot be a knower either. And the absence of the notion of 'I' during deep-sleep and liberation shows that the characteristic of being a knower is not natural to it.

Again, the agency of the soul, according to the Advaitin is only illusory. Śaṅkara proves in the *kartradhikarana* that the soul is an agent. But subsequently under the *sūtra - yathā ca takṣobhayathā*, he argues that the agency of the soul is not natural to it but only caused due to the association of *buddhi*. If it were natural to the soul, then there can never be release from it. And as agency always involves misery it cannot be said to be present at the state of release. Hence just as a carpenter becomes an agent when associated with his tools and remains a non-

31. B S S B., II.iii..17

32. *Pañcapādika*, pp.85-86

agent when dissociated from them, so the soul becomes an agent when associated with the instrument, namely, *buddhi* or *antahkarana* and remains as a non-agent when dissociated from it. Hence, in effect, the agency of the soul is only adventitiously presented in it³³.

Further the soul, being Brahman itself, is all pervasive in size. But yet, it is declared in the scriptures to be atomic in size. This again is because the characteristic of *antahkarana*, namely, atomicity, is attributed to the soul³⁴, though it (the soul) is, by itself, all-pervasive.

To sum up : the soul is a blend of pure consciousness and *antahkarana*. The characteristics of the soul such as agency, enjoyership, knowership and atomicity are adventitiously presented in it and not natural to it. This itself is bondage and liberation constitutes release from these attributed qualities and remaining in its natural state as Brahman.

3.3.1. REFUTATION OF THE ADVAITA VIEW

Rāmānuja directs a severe criticism on the Advaitic view of the soul and declares that the soul is a reality according to every *pramāṇa* and not a fictitious appearance. It is a complete whole in itself and does not consist of sentient and insentient components. It is the substratum of knowledge, a natural agent and an enjoyer. These constitute the essential attributes of the soul and it is impossible to conceive of the soul without any of these qualities. In fact, divested of these, there can be no difference between the soul and insentient matter.

Agency, enjoyership and knowership are the characteristic features of a sentient being and it is rather

33. *B.S.S.B.*, II.iii.40.

34. *ibid.*, II.iii.29.

strange that these are admitted to be present in the insentient *antahkarana* by the Advaitin.

Śaṅkara rejects the *Sāṅkhya* view on the ground that knowership and agency are the characteristics of a sentient being and are not attributable to an insentient *prakṛti*³⁵. But the same criticism is equally applicable to his own view, if an insentient *antahkarana* is admitted to be endowed with the characteristics of agency and knowership.

According to Rāmānuja, the instance cited above does not involve any contradiction at all. It is because, the essential nature of the soul is to become aware of itself as 'I', which is called *pratyaktva*. In this notion, the soul, no doubt becomes the subject as well as the object of knowledge. Nevertheless there is no contradiction here as held by the Advaitin. It is because the soul as a precondition to knowing objects external to itself, first knows itself which is its very nature. This has been discussed in the previous chapter³⁶.

Another defect pointed out earlier is that agency always leads to misery due to which it cannot be admitted as natural to the soul. But it is not observed so in all cases. For instance, smearing of sandal-paste generates delight and does not lead to misery. On the contrary, non-activity in respect of scriptural injunctions leads to hell, which is full of misery³⁷. Hence it is not agency or its absence that leads to misery, but only performance or non performance of prohibited or prescribed actions.

35. ibid., I.iv.5, II.ii.1

36. infra. p. 68

37. S.P. on ŚB., II. iii.39, Vol II, p.375.

3.4 RĀMĀNUJA'S VIEW

The soul according to Rāmānuja is real and not an illusory appearance caused by *avidyā*. It is a complete whole in itself and the content of the cognition of "I".

The statements of oneness between the soul and Brahman in the *Upanisad*-s do not mean absolute oneness as construed by the Advaitins. They only emphasize the inseparableness of the two.

The statements of oneness are not found exclusively with regard to the soul and Brahman, but also are found in respect of insentient matter and Brahman. Just as the latter cannot be taken in their literal sense, so the former also cannot be taken literally. This is because the nature of Brahman has been declared to be essentially different from insentient matter and also from the soul. And the author of the *Brahmasūtra*-s not only states repeatedly the clear distinction between the soul and Brahman, but also affirms the superior nature of Brahman as in the aphorism - *adhikam tu bhedanirdesat*³⁸ etc.

The conception of oneness between the soul and Brahman has been discussed in detail in the previous chapter³⁹.

Accordingly, the oneness between the soul and Brahman, and also between the world and Brahman, is in the sense of inseparability and not in an absolute sense. We shall now see in some detail the relation of the soul to Brahman.

38. *B.S.*, II.i.22.

39. *infra*. pp.83-92

3.4.1. THE SOUL IN RELATION TO BRAHMAN

The author of the *Brahmasūtra*-s declares that the soul is an *amṛṣā* (mode) of Brahman:

*amṛṣo nānāvyapadeśāt anyathā cāpi
dāśakitavāditvam adhiyata eke⁴⁰.*

And the reason he states is that scriptures speak of it as different from and also one with Brahman. Thus the conception of the relation between the soul and Brahman according to Bādarāyaṇa, is not one of difference-cum-non-difference, in the sense in which Bhāskara or Yādavaprakāśa understands. Nor is it in the sense of oneness as held by Śaṅkara. On the otherhand, it is one of mode and substantive - *amṛṣā* and *amṛṣī*.

What is significant here is that Bādarāyaṇa does not take the declarations of difference and non-difference to propound a theory of difference-cum-non-difference, but holds them as a clue to view that the soul is an *amṛṣā*. And he settles the issue on the basis of Upaniṣadic and other *smṛti* passages which explicitly speak of the soul as an *amṛṣā*. For example,

*pādo'sya viśvā bhūtāni tripādasyāmṛtam̄ divi⁴¹
mamaivāmṛṣo jīvaloke jīvabhūtaḥ sanātanah⁴².*

Thus on the authority of the author of *Brahmasūtra*-s, Rāmānuja concludes that the soul is an *amṛṣā* of Brahman.

Though the soul is said to be an *amṛṣā*, it does not form a part of the essential nature of Brahman, as the essential nature of Brahman is partless. The soul remains at all times inseparably one with Brahman, but yet is not

40. B.S., II.iii.42.

41. *Tait.Ār. Pur.Śū.*, III.xii.3

42. *B.G.*, XV.7.

altogether one with it. And the relation does not have any worldly analogy. It is in this sense that it is declared that the state of *jīva* being an *amṛta* could be known only from the scriptures and which is to be realized later directly in the ripened state of meditation or at the state of liberation.

Thus in the system of Rāmānuja, the soul and Brahman are essentially different and yet are inseparably one. It is, therefore, viewed as an *amṛta* of Brahman in a very special sense so that it forms neither a part of Brahman's essential nature nor remains totally separated from it. This is what is signified by the term *amṛta* in the aphorism. Thus the declarations of both oneness as well as difference between the soul and Brahman in the scriptures are valid in their primary senses. In the words of Rāmānuja,

*evam jīvaparayoh viśeṣaṇaviśeṣyatva-kṛitam
svabhāva-vailakṣanyaṁ āśritya bhedanirdeśāḥ
pravartante abhedanirdeśāstu prthaksiddhyanarha
viśeṣaṇānām viśeṣya paryantatvam āśritya
mukhyatvenopapadyante⁴³*

3.4.2. THE SOUL AS ETERNAL

The soul according to Rāmānuja is eternal and is a reality in itself. It is eternal in the sense that it does not undergo any change in its essential nature unlike insentient matter, which constantly undergoes change. In other words, it is immutable and remains the same at all times. There occurs change in its attributive consciousness; but this, however, does not affect the eternal character of the soul because of its immutable nature.

43. S.B., II.iii.45.

The Upaniṣadic texts that speak of creation and destruction refer to the association and disassociation of the soul from the body.

3.4.3: THE ATOMIC NATURE OF THE SELF

Rāmānuja further maintains that the soul is atomic in size, neither all-pervasive nor of intermediate size. It cannot be of a limited size; for in that case it has to be admitted that it either undergoes change or does not. To either of the alternatives there are difficulties. If it is admitted to be not undergoing any change, then the difficulties that were pointed out earlier⁴⁴, while dealing with the *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* view would arise. On the other hand, if it is accepted as subject to change then there would arise conflict with the Upaniṣadic teaching that it does not undergo any change in its essential nature. It comes to this that the soul cannot be of an intermediate size.

That the soul cannot be all-pervasive is clear from the *Upaniṣad*-s which speak of the ascent of the soul from the body, to the other world and its return. These texts would be rendered meaningless if the soul were all-pervasive. Further the scriptures expressly declare the soul to be atomic in size, and also seek to reiterate the minute size through illustrations. The text -

*eṣo 'nurātma cetasa veditavyah*⁴⁵

states that the soul, which is atomic has to be perceived through a cleansed mind. And the text -

*vālāgraśatabhāgasya śatadhā kalpitasya ca
bhāgo jīvah sa vijñeyah*⁴⁶

44. *infra. p.114*

45. *Mund. Up., III.i.9*

46. *Svet. Up., V.9.*

states that if one cuts the tip of a hair into a hundred pieces and one part of it into another hundred pieces, then one part of the latter is the size of the *jīva*.

Further the soul cannot be admitted to be all pervasive on the ground that it will not only go against the spirit of the scriptures, but also will involve logical contradictions. If the soul is all-pervasive, what then, it may be asked, is the cause for the rise and the destruction of knowledge in it. If the soul itself is admitted to be the cause then there should either be knowledge at all times or no knowledge at all. If, on the other hand, knowledge is admitted to arise as a result of the contact of the soul with mind or other instruments of knowledge such as the sense-organs, even then there should be knowledge at all times; for, being eternal and omnipresent, the soul is eternally in contact with them. Moreover, the position that a particular soul has knowledge of a particular object at a given time cannot be maintained, as every soul is in contact with every instrument of cognition at all times⁴⁷. On these grounds, it cannot be held that the soul is all-pervasive.

To sum up: the soul, according to Rāmānuja, is atomic in size; yet, it does pervade the entire body through its attributive consciousness and hence is capable of experiencing the feelings throughout the body. The scriptures which speak of the soul as infinite must be taken to refer only to the all-pervasive nature of the attributive consciousness; and not to its substratum, namely, the *jīva*.

The view of Rāmānuja thus accounts for all the declarations of the scriptures without involving any contradiction. It is, therefore, in accordance with the teachings of the scriptures and the *Brahmasūtra*-s.

47. Š.B. , II.iii.32 ,

3.4.4. THE SOUL AS A KNOWER

According to Rāmānuja, knowledge is the distinctive feature of the soul. It is this that distinguishes the soul from insentient matter.

The soul is self-manifest and always remains revealed to itself as 'I'. The 'I'-cognition' or the *aham pratyaya* is not illusory; it forms the essence of the soul. The chief characteristic of the soul is its ability to know itself; and this characteristic abides in the soul, always enabling the latter to remain as the knower of its own self.

The soul is not just pure-consciousness as maintained by the schools of *Advaita* and the *Sāṅkhya*; it is also the substratum of consciousness. In the *Upaniṣad*-s the soul is referred to as of the form-knowledge (*vijñānaghāṇaḥ*)⁴⁸ and also as a knower(*vijñatā*)⁴⁹.

The soul is said to be pure consciousness because it is self-manifest. But it is not only consciousness, but also a conscious being as it is aware not only of itself, but also of objects external to itself. Thus it is knowledge in itself as well as a knower. In a way, the nature of the soul, can be said to be analogous to a lamp, which is luminous by itself and also illuminates objects external to it.

3.4.5. THE SOUL AS AN AGENT

The soul is essentially an agent according to Rāmānuja. The *Sāṅkhya* and the *Advaita* schools do not subscribe to the view that the soul is essentially an agent.

Scriptures too deny agency in respect of the soul at some places, and posit it to the *guna*-s or to *prakṛti*.

48. *Br. Up.*, IV.iv

49. *ibid.* IV.iv.14

For instance, the *Bhagavadgītā* passage -

*prakṛteḥ kriyamānāni guṇaiḥ karmāṇi sarvaśah
ahaṅkāravimūḍhātmā kartāhamiti manyate⁵⁰.*

declares that everything is carried out by the *guṇa*-s of *prakṛti* and to think that the soul is an agent is nothing but delusion.

And another passage,

kāryakāraṇakartrtvē hetuh prakrtirucyate⁵¹

states that it is the *prakṛti* that is the cause for carrying out all actions.

Rāmānuja, however rejects the above view on the ground that the scriptures themselves can become meaningful only if the soul is inherently an agent and not other wise. According to him, the agency of the soul is clearly imbedded in the *karma* theory, according to which, every soul reaps the fruits of its actions.

Further Rāmānuja observes that scriptures never intend to deny the agency of the soul as is sought to be made out. The reason why agency is apparently denied to the soul in some texts and attributed to the *guṇa*-s is due to the fact that as long as the soul is in bondage, its agency is influenced by the three *guṇa*-s of *prakṛti*. It is due to this that it is rather metaphorically stated that the *guṇa*-s themselves or the *prakṛti* is the agent⁵².

In fact, the agency of the soul is recognised in the *Bhagavadgītā* itself. The text,

adhishṭhānam tathā kartā⁵³.

50. *B.G.*, III. 27

51. *ibid.*, XIII.20.

52. *S.B.*, II.iii.33

53. *B.G.*, XVIII.14

makes specific reference to the soul as an agent. But agency is spoken of with reference to the *guṇa*-s first, to show the influence of the *guṇa*-s upon the soul as long as the soul is in bodily existence.

Thus according to Rāmānuja, the agency of the soul is natural to it and not illusorily superimposed.

3.4.6 AGENCY OF THE SOUL - DEPENDENT UPON GOD

Rāmānuja further declares that the agency of the soul is dependent upon God. And the view is purely based upon the scriptural texts which declare God as the indweller and the inner-controller of every soul. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* text -

*ya ātmani tisṭhan ya ātmānamantaro
yamayati*⁵⁴.

states that God dwells in the soul and controls it from within⁵⁵.

3.4.6.1. FREE WILL AND FATALISM.

The fact that the soul is under the control of God does not mean the soul has no freedom at all. God is the controller, in the sense that, for every act of the soul, His direction or consent is necessary as without that, the soul cannot act. Yet God does not dictate or force the soul to act as He wishes. It is thus: the soul, according to Rāmānuja, is at perfect liberty to act as it wishes, at the first instance of every act. At that time, God remains

54. *Br Up*, V.vii.26

55. *S.B.*, II.iii.40

merely as an onlooker. In the second instance He directs the soul to function further according to its initial desire. As it is not possible for the soul to proceed according to its wish without the direction or consent of God, it is said to be under the control of God.

Yet as the soul has got absolute freedom at the first instance wherein it can exercise its discretion, without any external interference whatsoever, it becomes the subject of scriptural injunctions⁵⁶

3.4.6.2. AN OBJECTION

Now the following question arises: from the above discussion it is known that the soul could perform any act, only with the consent of God. And this is true even when the soul acts in an evil way. But when the soul proceeds in an evil path, God could prevent it effortlessly merely by withholding His consent, and prevent the souls from committing sins, thus saving them from the attendant evils. The failure on His part to do so shows only His cruelty or mercilessness towards the souls.

But, according to Rāmānuja, there is no room for the above objection in view of the following facts: the souls have been provided with the capacity to know(*jñātrtvā*), the power to act(*kartṛtvā*) and the right to enjoy the fruits of the action (*bhoktṛtvā*), by God. It comes to this that, the souls are essentially different from the insentient matter, which is devoid of any of these features.

It must be noted that although both matter and souls are under the absolute control of God, yet He does not treat the souls on par with the insentient matter. The latter

56. ibid., II.iii.41

by itself is incapable either to act or to refrain from acting, and is made to act or otherwise by the will of a sentient being.

The soul, unlike matter, has been given the ability to think and act by itself, and also it has free will either to act or not to. If God interferes and makes the soul act or refrain from acting according to His will, then there will be no distinction between the sentient soul and the insentient matter. Hence He never interferes with the freedom of souls. This is evidenced in the *Bhagavadgītā*. In the entire *Gītā*, the Lord declares clearly and repeatedly that He is the indweller and the absolute controller of all the souls. This being the case, it will not be totally impossible for Him to make Arjuna fight the battle by His mere will. On the other hand, throughout the *Gītā*, He only tries to infuse knowledge and ultimately leaves it to Arjuna to choose his way.

vimṛśyaitadaśeṣena yathecchasi tathā kuru⁵⁷

(Think over all that I have said, and act according to your wish).

From the above it would be clear that, though the soul is under the absolute control of God, He never imposes His will upon it. Nevertheless He does not remain totally indifferent. As the soul has been provided with the ability to know, think and act, God has shown through the *śāstra-s*, the right and the wrong, and has indirectly forbidden the soul from committing interdicted actions by pointing out the evils that would ensue thereby. In spite of this, if the soul deliberately commits sinful acts persistently not caring about the resultant fruits, then God

57. B.G., XVIII.63.

simply allows it to proceed in its way which itself is a sort of punishment:

*anumatiḥ phaladānamubhayamapi dandaprakāra
eva⁵⁸*

But still it may be contended that when the soul proceeds on detrimental paths, God remains indifferent or grants His assent, there will remain the charge that He is merciless (*nirdaya*).

Rāmānuja, however, is of the view that the above criticism cannot be levelled upon God. He states that “mercy is defined as one’s unbearable state at seeing another’s suffering. It is a spontaneous feeling which expects nothing in return.” But such a mercy, which is misplaced in one who is deliberately bent upon transgressing all Śastric injunctions will not be a virtue, but will mean only an abject impotence. What is required in such places is only a firm action (against the wrong-doers) which alone will be a virtue:

*dayā hi nāma svārthanirapekṣā paraduhkha
asahiṣṇutā. sā ca svaśasana ativṛtti vyavasāyinyapi
vartamānā na guṇayāvakalpate. pratyuta
apūṁstvamevāvahati. tannigraha eva tatra
guṇah⁵⁹.*

From this, it should not be thought that God ceases to be merciful. He forgives all the innumerable heinous sins that the *jīva* has continuously accumulated all through the ages, the moment it withdraws the will to commit those sins. Thereafter God Himself takes every effort to bring

58. *S.P. on S.B.*, II.ii.1

59. *S.B.*, II.ii.1.

the well-being to the *jīva*, leading ultimately to its final emancipation:

svaśāsana-ativr̥tti-vyavasāyanivṛttimātreṇa-anadi-anantakalpa upacita durviṣṭha-ananta-aparadha-anāṅgikāreṇa niratiśayasukha-samvṛddhaye svayameva prayata⁶⁰

Thus, according to Rāmānuja, God is abundantly and uniformly merciful, towards all the *jīva*-s. But as the *jīva*-s are provided with a free will and power to know and act themselves, He does not thrust His will upon them when they tread a wrong path, inspite of His absolute control over them, which is fully in consonance with his Godly nature. He merely looks for a positive attitude from the *jīva*, to eschew all evil, and a will to submit to śāstric injunctions, which is predominantly a mental disposition rather than any physical act. From then on, He takes it upon Himself as His bounden duty to protect the *jīva*, enhancing more and more, the natural inner urge of the *jīva* for attaining spiritual bliss culminating ultimately in a union with Himself, whereafter the *jīva* enjoys infinite bliss in the company of God, forever.

3.4.6.3. A FURTHER OBJECTION

The above discussion shows that the *jīva* has an absolute free-will and that it acts only at its own discretion, not being influenced by God. But the *Kauśitaki Upaniṣad* seems to express a contrary view thus :

60. Lot. cit

*eṣa hyeva sādhukarma kārayati tam yamebhyo
lokebhyā unniśati; eṣa evaśādhukarma
kārayati tam yamadhoninīśati⁶¹.*

(God Himself makes the *jīva* do the right thing, whom He wants to elevate from the lower worlds; and He Himself makes that *jīva* do the wrong things, whom he wants to punish).

Thus it seems that the *jīva* does not have a free will as is sought to be made out.

Rāmānuja replies that the said passage is not a general statement, but concerns itself with very special cases.

The word *tam* in the passage cited above specifically refers to a particular individual soul who has been consistently pursuing the path of devotion along with the path of *karma* relating to his stage and class of life. This word, therefore, is not be taken as referring to souls in general. The import of the passage therefore would be: God is gratified by the conduct of a particular soul and takes pleasure in seeing that he carries out his religious duties in an unswerving manner and thereby enables him to attain the supreme human-end - that is, liberation. And for another who persistently and deliberately acts in an extremely deplorable manner (by transgressing all scriptural injunctions), God Himself in order to castigate him, arouses a desire in such acts that will take him away from Himself to a very low state⁶².

Rāmānuja substantiates this view by making reference to the *Gītā* text which declares that God Himself destroys the darkness of ignorance and bestows the light of knowledge with utmost compassion, on those who worship

61. *Kau.Up.*, III.65.

62. *Ś.B.*, II.iii.41.

Him, yearning for His company at all times.

*teśām satatayuktānām bhajatām prītipūrvakam
dadāmi buddhiyogam tam yena mām upayanti te
teṣamevānukampārtham ahamajñānajām tamah
nāśayāmyātmabhāvastho jñānadīpena bhāsvata⁶³*

Rāmānuja further observes that He Himself throws them into demoniac and inauspicious births again and again, those who are cruel and highly debased and who harbour a deep hatred for God and abjure that the world is devoid of God:

*asatyam apratiṣṭham te jagadāhuranīśvaram⁶⁴
māmātmaparadeheṣu pradvisantobhyasyaśyakāḥ⁶⁵
tānahāṁ dviṣataḥ krūrān saṁsāreṣu ṇarādhamān
ksipāmyajasram aśubhān aśurīṣeva yoniṣhu⁶⁶*

The above view that God Himself throws the soul into inauspicious births and makes him do evil act, again leads us to the original question of mercilessness on the part of God. Sudarśana Sūri, raising the above objection, observes that it is not a rule that mercy is always a virtue and its absence is always a defect, for it is the duty of the protector to punish the wicked and protect the virtuous.

*dayācedguṇah nigrahśceddoṣa iti na niyamo 'sti .
loke asthānadayāyāḥ sthānanigrahasya ca
gunatvadosatva darśanābhāvāt⁶⁷.*

63. B.G., X 11.

64. ibid., XVI. 18.

65. ibid., XVI. 18.

66. ibid., XVI. 19.

67. S.P. on S.B., II. ii. 1.

Further the chastisement meted out to the *jīva* also is only for its own ultimate good, for it purifies and makes it eligible to pursue the path to liberation. But God allowing the soul to do evil and then punishing them does not show His mercilessness, but only His Godly nature, as explained earlier. In this connection, Prof. Raghavachar's observations are worth recording :

"Divine grace involves no violence to individual personality. It does not operate in the direction of securing the *summum bonum* when that direction of its operation is not desired by the individual. That too is a fundamental law of the Supreme working of Divine grace. All good is a gift of God. But no gift is thrust on unwilling and undesiring individuals. This is neither a limitation nor a denial of the compassion or omnipotence of God. The vision of God is a fulfilment of individual personality and not a suppression of it. It will not be such a fulfilment, when it is inflicted upon loveless souls. Its very quality as the Supreme good demands individual aspiration and longing for it. God, as Vedāntadeśika puts it, gives evil when evil is desired, though it is evil, because it is His fundamental nature to fulfil the desires of the individual. Thus love for perfection is a fundamental pre-supposition of perfection. This does not make God's grace conditional. That aspiration must receive fulfilment is itself a law that is an expression of the unconditional grace of God. This dependence on aspiration is for rendering the fulfilment a real joy and substantial self-realization. It is out of sheer grace that divine grace awaits the birth of aspiration; otherwise it would be a violation of personality. Grace despotic would be less of grace, than grace responsive to and demanding human longing for grace."⁶⁸

68. Introduction to *Vedārthasaṅgraha*, p. 110.

3.5 IS ŚĀṄKARA'S VIEW FAVOURED IN THE BRAHMASŪTRA-S? - A REVIEW.

On the issue of knowership, Śaṅkara's view does not seem to be in conformity with the spirit of the *sūtra*-s. He insists that knowership cannot be inherent to the soul on the ground that it involves change. And hence he holds that the soul is only pure consciousness and not a conscious being.

Rāmānuja accepts the view that the soul is pure consciousness; but he does not subscribe to the view that it is not a conscious being. This he does both on the basis of experience and on the authority of the express statements of knowership in the scriptures. He further holds that knowership does not involve change in the strict sense of the term and this has been dealt with in the previous chapter⁶⁹.

The author of the *Brahmasūtra*-s defines the soul as *jñā*, which Śaṅkara altogether arbitrarily construes as pure knowledge. Sudarśana Sūri points out that the word actually means only a knower as this is how it is grammatically derived and used in language. And the lexical recording goes as *dhiro maniṣi jñāḥ prājñāḥ*⁷⁰. Thus the interpretation of the word as pure knowledge is only a forced one⁷¹.

The aphorism *jñō 'ta eva*⁷² is directed in fact, not only against the *Vaiśeṣika*-s who hold the soul to be an insentient principle but also against those like the *Sāṅkhya*-s, who hold it to be of the form of pure knowledge, and not a knower. Hence the criticism is equally applicable to Sankara who shares the *Sāṅkhya* view in this regard.

69. infra. pp.70-71

70. *Amarakośa, I Kāṇḍa, Brahmavarga.*

71. *S.P. on S.B., II.iii.32.*

72. *B.S., II.iii.19.*

Rāmānuja's interpretation, whereas, is natural and in tune with the spirit of the *sūtra*. Śaṅkara's interpretation further, fails to account for those *śruti* passages that speak of the soul as a knower and those that make a clear distinction between the substantive and the attributive consciousness.

In the *Brahmasūtra*-s, the issue that follows, concerns with the size of the soul. The discussion regarding the soul centres around the concept of knowership. That is, there arises the objection that if the soul is admitted to be inherently a knower, there will arise the contingency that it will have to know all things that happen at all places, because it is all-pervasive (*vibhu*). The author of the *sūtra*-s rejects this objection on the ground that the soul is only atomic and not all pervasive.

Now, Śaṅkara determines the size of the soul as all-pervasive in the *utkrāntyadhikarāṇa*. According to him, the *prima facie* view is that the soul is atomic. And the ground on which he seeks to establish the soul as all-pervasive is that it is none other than Brahman in its essential nature. Hence statements of atomicity in respect of the soul are only figurative, as the atomicity of *antahkaraṇa*, is attributed to the soul. In other words, according to Śaṅkara, the size of the *antahkaraṇa* is spoken of as that of the soul, by courtesy, though the soul is only all-pervasive⁷³.

Sudarśana Sūri, however, finds the view unsatisfactory on the following grounds: according to him, since the discussion concerns with the soul it is not appropriate to state its atomicity as the *prima facie* view, for then it will stultify those texts that state the soul as atomic. It cannot be said that those texts speak of the conditioned state of *jīva*, the state which is caused adventitiously, and not of the

73. B.S.S.B, II.iii.17.

natural state, of *jīva*. It is because the view that the atomic size is only adventitiously presented does not stand logical scrutiny. In the first place, there will arise the question whether the atomicity that is caused adventitiously lasts as long as the soul lasts or not. If it is held to last as long as the soul, then it cannot be said to be adventitious. On the other hand, if it does not last as long as the soul lasts, then it amounts to saying that the soul does not last till *mokṣa*. This is because according to *Advaita*, *mokṣa* constitutes removal of *jīva*-hood, which is attained just by the removal of the *upādhi* even before attaining *mokṣa*. And this certainly is an unwelcome position⁷⁴.

Further Śaṅkara is not justified in holding that it is only because of its association with an *upādhi* that the soul becomes atomic. It is thus: Upaniṣadic texts no doubt declare that the soul is atomic in size. But they do not offer any explanation as to why it is to be viewed as atomic in size. From this we can deduce that the atomic size that pertains to the soul is quite natural to it. This would become clear when we compare the texts that speak of the soul as of atomic size, with those that speak of Brahman too as atomic in size. The latter, after stating that Brahman is atomic in size offer an explanation as to why Brahman is referred to be so. The explanation offered is that Brahman is referred to as of atomic in size with a view to facilitate its concentrated meditation in the heart of the *upāsaka*. From this it is evident that only all-pervasiveness is natural to Brahman while the atomic size is only an attribution to it for the purpose of meditation. Since no such explanation is offered in the *Upaniṣad*-s for viewing the soul to be atomic in size, it has to be taken that atomic size is natural to the soul. The Advaitin's contention that it is only caused adventitiously, therefore, is not correct⁷⁵.

74. *S.P. on S.B.*, II.iii.32, Vol II, p.367.

75. *ibid.*, p. 368

Further the text-

*tēna pradyotena eṣā ātmā niṣkrāmati*⁷⁶.

states that Ātman or the soul departs from the body to the other world. The Advaitin holds that *ātman* or the soul is all-pervasive as it is identical with Brahman; but owing to its association with mind it appears to be atomic in size and this enables the soul to depart from the body. Rāmānuja points out that atomic size being natural to it, there is no necessity to assume that it is adventitious. Further the primary significance of the term - *ātman* is the soul as such. The Advaitin's concept of the soul as consciousness associated with the *upādhi*, that is mind, involves the adoption of secondary signification in the case of the word -*ātman*. But when primary signification holds good, there is no reason why it should be abandoned and secondary signification adopted.

Yet another reason as to why the word *ātman* referred to in the *Upaniṣad* cited above should not be viewed as one associated with the limiting condition, namely, the mind is this: the *Upaniṣad*-s in some of their texts speak of the departure of the limiting conditions such as mind, etc. If, according to the Advaitin, mind forms a part of the soul, then the reference to the departure of the soul itself would involve the departure of the mind too. And so there is no need for specific reference to the departure of mind. From this it would be clear that the soul does not consist within itself the limiting condition - mind. It is naturally atomic in size. And this enables it to depart from the body.

Further the Upaniṣadic text

*eṣonurātmā cetasa veditavyah*⁷⁷

76. *Br. Up.*, VI.iv.24.

77. *Mund. Up.*, III.i.9.

specifically refers to the soul as atomic in size. This text does not refer to either of the states - bondage or release in relation to the soul. This, therefore, is a stronger evidence to hold that the soul is atomic in size naturally⁷⁸.

To sum up this part of the discussion: atomic size is natural to the soul. Hence it is inappropriate to assume that all-pervasiveness characterizes the soul and then explain that atomic size spoken of with reference to it as adventitiously present.

The *kartradhikarana* consists of seven aphorisms. The theme of this section is agency on the part of the soul. Rāmānuja in his commentary observes that agency is natural to the soul. After that he refers to an objection that if agency is natural to the soul, then there will be no cessation to it and states that this objection is removed by the author of the *sūtra-s* by stating that just as a carpenter does his work when he wishes to and remains quiet when he does not wish to, in the same way, the soul would perform activities when it wishes to and would remain quiet when it does not wish to. Further, the carpenter does not cease to be an agent when he remains quiet. In the same way, the soul does not cease to be an agent when it remains quiet. This view is expressed in the *Sūtra* -

*yathā ca takṣobhayathā*⁷⁹

which is the last one in the *kartradhikarana*.

Śaṅkara, however, treats the above *sūtra* as constituting a separate section and states that this aphorism discusses the question whether agency on the part of the soul is real or indeterminable and concludes by saying that on the analogy, of the carpenter who ceases to be an agent

78. *S.P. on Ś.B.*, III, ii.32, VoHI, p.368.

79. *B.S.*, III. iii. 39.

when he does not utilize his instruments, the soul also ceases to be an agent in the state of deep-sleep, etc. Agency, therefore, is indeterminable on the part of the soul.

Rāmānuja is of the view that there is no basis for treating the aphorism - *yathā ca takṣobhayathā*, as constituting a separate *adhikarāṇa*. On the other hand, there is stronger reason to treat it as a part of the *kartradhikarāṇa* itself. It is because the latter proves the characteristic of agency on the part of the soul after a thorough examination of the *Sāṅkhya* theory that the characteristic of agency pertains only to the *buddhi-tattva*. There could arise a doubt as to whether the characteristic of agency belongs to the *buddhi-tattva* or not. And it is precisely this doubt that is sought to be dispelled in this *adhikarāṇa*. There is no ground for the rise of the doubt as to whether agency on the part of the soul is real or indeterminable. As such there arises no occasion or need to dispel such a doubt. This leads one to conclude that there is no need to treat the aphorism - *yathā ca takṣobhayathā* as a distinct one and to hold that it is intended to dispel the doubt regarding the inherent nature of agency on the part of the soul.

Further the section *kartradhikarāṇa* excluding the aphorism - *yathā ca takṣobhayathā*, is, according to Śaṅkara, intended to refute the *Sāṅkhya* view that *buddhi* - *tattva* is the agent and the *puruṣa* or the *self* is only an experient. A careful study of the *Sāṅkhya* view along with that of *Advaita* shows that there is practically no difference between the two schools in so far as the nature of agency is concerned. The *Sāṅkhya* too admits that the *buddhi-tattva* is the agent and the agency that belongs to it is transferred to the soul. The *Advaitin* too advocates practically the same view. It comes to this that the *kartradhikarāṇa* rejects the *Sāṅkhya* view that agency of

the *buddhi-tattva* is falsely presented in the soul. When such is the case, if the aphorism - *yathā ca takṣobhayathā* is interpreted as establishing indeterminable agency on the part of the soul, then there would be the defect of inconsistency.

It cannot be maintained that the *kartradhikarāṇa* just seeks to establish the agency of the soul, without concerning about whether it is natural or illusory. This is because there arises no doubt in this matter at all.

Śaṅkara is of the view that agency cannot be natural to the soul on two grounds. One is that liberation is characterised by the cessation of agency and another is that agency leads always to misery.

Regarding the first one, Sudarśana Sūri points out that from scriptural passages it is clear that the soul remains as an agent even at the state of liberation. This is evidenced by passages like *jakṣat kṛidān ramamāṇah*, etc. And he rejects the second ground by saying that it is not noticed that agency invariably leads to misery. For example, agency in regard to acts like smearing of sandalpaste, etc., over the body is seen to give rise to delight and not misery. It is only one's past *karma* that is responsible for misery and not agency⁸⁰.

That the author of the aphorisms views the soul as an inherent agent is proved on another ground too. In the subsequent *adhikarāṇa* called *parāyattādhikarāṇa*, the author of the *sūtra-s* declares that the agency of the soul is derived from Brahman. If the agency of the soul were only superimposed as thought by Śaṅkara, then there would not arise any question as to whether it is dependent upon Brahman or independent. Thus it follows that the view of Bādarāyaṇa is that agency is only natural to the soul and not illusory.

80. *S.P. on S.B.*, III.ii.39, Vol II, p.374.

Regarding the question of the relation between the soul and Brahman also, Śaṅkara's view, observes Sudarśana Sūri, does not find favour with the aphorisms. Badarāyaṇa declares the soul as an *amśa* of Brahman, which expression Śaṅkara altogether arbitrarily interprets as *amśa iva amśah*. Sudarśana Sūri points out that, according to *Advaita*, there is no possibility of the relation of *amśa-amśi-bhāva* at all. It is thus: the soul can be said to be an *amśa* neither of Brahman nor of *Īśvara*. As Brahman is admitted to be partless, the soul cannot be admitted to be Its *amśa*. It cannot be admitted to be an *amśa* of *Īśvara* too; for, both the soul and *Īśvara* are mere appearances of Brahman and as such there cannot be any relation of *amśa-amśi* between the two⁸¹.

From the foregoing discussions it would have become clear that Bādarāyaṇa determines the nature of the soul as atomic in size, a knower, an agent, a dependent agent and an *amśa* of Brahman. Śaṅkara, while he accepts all these views, adds that these are only caused illusory and are not natural to the soul, for which, however, there is no evidence in the *sūtra*-s.

Further throughout the *Brahmasūtra*-s, the soul is treated as a separate entity in itself, and there is not even a slight suggestion that it is composed of two components wherein one of the components is illusory.

The *Brahmasūtra*-s are clearly dualistic in character and they bring out a clear distinction between the soul and Brahman. In spite of this Śaṅkara is keen to emphasize the non-difference between the two. He seeks to explain the references to difference between the soul and Brahman in each *adhikarana* as belonging to the *vyāhārika* state and not to the *pāramārthika* state. But the division of

81 *ibid*, p.385

reality into *vyāvahārika* and *pāramārthika* seems not to be corroborated by the *sūtra*-s. Further, there is convincing evidence to show a clear distinction between the soul and God.

Bādarāyaṇa, at the outset defines Brahman as the cause of the world and devotes the major part of the first chapter to show that the definition is not over-applicable in the case of the soul or *pradhāna*. And again while concluding he specifically states that the said definition is not applicable even in the case of the released soul as the characteristic of being the cause of the world is an exclusive feature of Brahman.

It can therefore be concluded that the *Brahmasūtra*-s besides emphasizing the distinction between the soul and Brahman affirm that agency is natural to the soul and not adventitious.

To sum up: Rāmānuja, following the author of the *sūtra*-s affirms that the soul is atomic in size and is an *amśa* of Brahman. It is an agent, and agency, unlike in the system of *Advaita*, is real and it is dependent upon Brahman. Again, unlike in *Advaita*, there is difference between the soul and Brahman.

CHAPTER IV

THE NATURE OF THE WORLD

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The view set forth in the *Upaniṣad*-s that Brahman is a Unitary Principle without a second, implies, according to the *Advaitin*, that the world given in perception is indeterminable or *mithyā*. An analysis of the cause-effect relation noticed in ordinary experience, the *Advaitin* contends, confirms the view that the world is indeterminable. The promissory statement in the *Upaniṣad*-s that by the knowledge of Brahman everything else would become known, substantiates the above view, he claims. It is thus: in the *Chāndogya*, the *Bṛhadāraṇayaka* and the *Muṇḍakopaniṣad*-s there occurs a promissory statement that by the knowledge of Brahman, everything else will become known. The question as to how could there arise the knowledge of everything by the knowledge of Brahman, the *Chāndogya* text answers by citing the illustrative example of the knowledge of the effects such as pot, etc., that results from the knowledge of clay, the cause. The nature of effects is set forth in the *Chāndogya* text-

*vācārambhaṇam vikāro nāmadheyam
mr̥ttiketyeva satyam¹*

This text, as understood by the *Advaitin*, means that the effect is merely referred to by name (*vācārambhaṇam*). It has no reality. And the verbal usage that one is the cause and another is an effect is devoid of any content (*nāmadheyem*).

1. *Ch. Up.*, VI.i.4.

Having interpreted the text thus, the Advaitin argues that when it is said that the knowledge of Brahman leads to the knowledge of every effect, what is meant is that it leads to the knowledge of the true nature of every effect. That is, there would arise the knowledge that no effect has independent reality apart from Brahman. And every effect is illusory.

The Advaitin contends that the theory of illusoriness of the world results due to the defects in the theories of causation advocated by the *Nyāya* and the *Sāṅkhya* schools.

4.2 THE NYĀYA THEORY OF CAUSATION

It is noticed in ordinary experience that an effect, in order to come into existence requires two factors - the material cause and the efficient cause. The *Nyāya* school holds that an effect is totally non-existent prior to its production and is newly brought into existence due to causal operation in the material cause, which is technically termed inherent cause or the *samavāyikāraṇa*. The cause and the effect thereafter continue to exist in the same substratum. The point that is of significance here is that the *samavāyikāraṇa* does not get transformed into the effect but remains as the substratum in which the effect is produced. This is called the *ārambhavāda* or the 'theory of *de novo* creation' or the *asatkāryavāda* or the theory that the effect which was totally non-existent in the cause is newly produced in it.

The theory of causation advocated by the *Nyāya* school is not sound on the ground that if an effect could come into existence from its prior non-existence, then since its prior non-existence is present in every object it could come into existence from any source and not necessarily from a specific entity.

4.3 THE *SĀNKHYA* THEORY OF CAUSATION

The *Sāṅkhya* school advocates the theory known as *satkāryavāda*, according to which, the effect pre-exists in its cause in a latent form. This accounts for the fact of one seeking an appropriate material for achieving a specific effect. And the causal operation is needed to manifest the effects that are in a latent form.

This view, however, does not stand to reason because the exact nature of manifestation cannot be explained. It is noticed that many kinds of effects like pots, jars, etc., evolve from a single cause, namely, clay. Now the basic position of the *Sāṅkhya* is that all effects are existent in their respective causes in latent forms and are manifested by causal operation. In that case, causal operation, being a manifesting factor, shall manifest not only pot but also jar and other objects; for all of them are equally existent in their latent forms in clay. This fact is noticed in the case of other manifesting factors, like a lamp. A lamp that is lit in order to manifest a pot, manifests not only a pot, but also other objects that are present there.

If causal operation is admitted to be a manifesting factor, then it would manifest all objects such as pot, jar and the like, simultaneously, which are present in clay. This, however, is not the case. It follows from this that *satkāryavāda*, cannot be maintained².

The difficulties pointed out above in regard to the theories of *asatkāryavāda* and *satkāryavāda*, show, according to the Advaitin, that causation itself is illusory.

2. *SB.*, II.i.6, Vol.2, pp.234-235.

The *Upaniṣad*-s, however declare that Brahman is the cause and the world is its effect. The Advaitin, in order to account for that, propounds "a unique theory of causation called *vivartavāda*, which at once accepts and denies causation. In fact it is more a denial than an acceptance³".

4.4. THE ADVAITA THEORY OF CAUSATION

According to *Advaita*, Brahman, is a transcendental entity, beyond all transformation, division, activity, etc., and is the cause of the world. The world is not a creation, but is only an appearance of Brahman. And the appearance is only through *prakṛti*, which is called *māyā*; and Brahman which is associated with it is called *māyi*. It is *māyā* that is the material cause of the world, and it gets transformed into the world. And Brahman is spoken of as the cause of the world by being the locus of *māyā*. *Māyā*, which gets transformed into the world is called the transformative material cause (*parinamyupādāna*); and, Brahman which serves as the locus of the transformation is called the transfigurative material cause (*vivartopādāna*).

Thus it is only through courtesy that the *Upaniṣad*-s speak of Brahman as the cause of the world. Brahman remains as the substratum of the illusion of the world, due to which it is said to be the cause of the world, although in reality It cannot become the cause in Its essential nature. The world, therefore, is only an illusory appearance and not a reality in itself.

An objection may arise as follows: the *Upaniṣad*-s speak of the order of creation, etc., of the world in detail. If it is held that the world

³ Studies in Rāmānuja Vedānta, p.92

is only an illusory appearance, then there is no need to refer to the order of creation, etc., of the world.

Śaṅkara, however, meets the above objection by stating that the process of creation stated in the *Upaniṣad*-s cannot be taken as a proof for its reality, as the order of creation mentioned in different *Upaniṣad*-s is not uniform in nature. This shows that it must be presumed that the *Upaniṣad*-s themselves are not in favour of the theory of creation of the world. Further no fruit is noticed to ensue from the knowledge of the creation of the world.

*bhavedapi kāryasya vigītavam
apratiṣṭyāt; na hyayam sṛṣṭyadi
prapañcaḥ pratipipādayiśitah; na hi
tatpratibaddhaḥ kaścit puruṣārthaḥ drṣyate
srūyate vā⁴.*

It follows that, according to Śaṅkara, the reference to the creation of the world in the *Upaniṣad*-s cannot be taken as a confirmation of the reality of the world. The dream objects too are stated in the *Upaniṣad*-s as creation of God. They, however, cannot be taken as real on the only ground that their creation too is mentioned in the *Upaniṣad*-s. They are only illusory as is evident from the *Brahmasūtra* -

*māyāmatram tu kārtṣṇyena anabhivyakta-
svarūpatvāt⁵.*

4. *B.B.S.B.*, I.iv.4

5. *B.S.*, III.ii.3.

wherein the author of the *sūtra*-s describes them as *māyāmātra* or illusory. Like the world of dream which is a short-lived one, the world of the waking state too is illusory. It is only a prolonged dream.

To sum up this part of the discussion:

- (1) Brahman is stated to be the cause of the world, only in the sense that it serves as the substratum for the appearance of the world-illusion and does not literally constitute its material cause;
- (2) the world is not a real entity in the sense of unsublatedness in the three divisions of time but is only an illusory appearance, like dream appearance, or the appearance of a shell in silver;
- (3) no logically satisfactory theory of causation can be established;
- (4) the statements of creation, etc., of the world in the *Upaniṣad*-s cannot be cited as ground to uphold the reality of the world; for, there are divergent views in the *Upaniṣad*-s themselves in regard to the order of creation. Further dream objects which are stated to be created in the *Upaniṣad*-s are only illusory; and,
- (5) liberation consists in the soul remaining in its natural state as Brahman free from the experience of the world. The sole means of liberation is knowledge which removes ignorance and through that, the experience of the world too. This confirms the view that the world is only illusory.

So far the Advaitin's view.

4.5 RĀMĀNUJA'S VIEW

Rāmānuja holds that the theory of causation cannot be held to be illusory, for its validity is not only a matter of experience; but also is testified to by the scriptures. The fact that Brahman is stated as the cause of the world is accepted by the Advaitin, but he holds it to be provisional and not final. This is because, to accept causality in respect of Brahman is to attribute some feature to it which would impair its non-dual character.

Rāmānuja, however, points out that the *Upaniṣad*-s propound the causality of Brahman in respect of the world and expound also the identity between the Brahman and the world by an analysis of cause-effect relation. In the *Brahmasūtra*-s, the first two chapters are devoted to proving that Brahman is the cause and the world is its effect. And the author of the aphorisms seeks to refute all the objections against this view and never once does he pronounce the world to be illusory. When this is the case there is no valid ground to maintain the theory of causation to be illusory.

The Advaitin rejects the theory of causation on the ground of logical difficulties noticed in the *asatkāryavāda* of the *Naiyāyika*-s and the *satkāryavāda* of the *Sāṅkhya*-s.

Rāmānuja argues that whereas it is true that the *asatkāryavāda* is fraught with difficulties and is also disapproved by the scriptures, the same is not the case with the *satkāryavāda*. Hence the Advaitin is not justified in rejecting the *satkāryavāda*.

According to Rāmānuja, *satkāryavāda* is not something, as contemplated by the *Sāṅkhya*. Whereas the *Sāṅkhya* is correct in holding that the effect is existent in its cause, prior to its origination, he goes wrong in holding that the effect exists as effect itself in its cause.

To explain: the *Sāṅkhya* school holds that the effect is existent prior to its production and it is existent both in regard to its form and substance. Pot exists as pot itself in its cause which is manifested by causal operation. This school illustrates this by making reference to the limbs of a turtle which remain hidden and explicit at different times⁶. They are not newly produced. The effect, therefore, remains as effect itself in its cause prior to its production. If this position is not admitted, then one would have to accept the theory that an effect is a *de novo* creation which is the *asatkāryavāda* of the *Naiyāyika*-s.

Rāmānuja, feels that the *Sāṅkhya*-s have precisely gone wrong in admitting that an effect exists as such in its cause prior to its production. It is true that the substance (*dravya*) of the cause and of the effect are one and the same, and hence the matter of the effect is always existent. But it is not true that the form(*avasthā*) of the effect also in existent prior to its production. In fact cause and effect are said to be one and the same only because the same material goes into the making of both. But they are different, in as much as they

6. S.T.K. on S.K., 9

have different forms. That is, effect is nothing but the cause having different disposition of parts. This view, Rāmānuja feels, would meet all the objections raised by the opponents of the *satkāryavāda*.

It was pointed out earlier that if the effect is already existent, the causal operation (*kārakavyāpāra*), would be rendered futile. But according to Rāmānuja this is not so. It is because the effect is said to be the attainment of a different form from that of the cause. And in order to bring about this the causal operation is essential. Since the theory of manifestation itself is not accepted, the criticisms levelled against that theory are of no consequence⁸.

Now a plausible objection against the view of Rāmānuja is that if the form of the effect is accepted to be newly originated, then it amounts to accepting the *Nyāya* view of the *asatkāryavāda* in respect of the form of the effect.

Rāmānuja points out that the *asatkāryavāda* is not a defect in its entirety. It is a defect only in respect of the origination of a *dravya* and not in respect of the origination of *avasthā*. It is the nature of *dravya*-s to take newer and newer forms due to which alone something is called an effect.

Further the *Naiyāyika* is not justified in holding that an *avasthā* is newly created. This is because there will arise the question even in his own system whether the so-called creation (*utpatti*) itself is created or not. The former alternative will lead

7. S.B., II.I.15.

8. ibid.

us to infinite regress and the latter will amount to accepting *satkāryavāda* in respect of *utpatti*.

In fact the *Naiyāyika* overlooks an elementary confusion when he raises the objection whether *avasthā* is subject to creation or not. It is because *avasthā* is a property (*dharma*) of a substance. And to raise a question whether it is subject to creation or not, is to predicate a *dharma* to another *dharma* which constitutes the defect called *nityasamāḍī*⁹

Hence the question whether *avasthā* is subject to *utpatti* or not does not arise. The fact remains, however, that both (*avasthā* and *utpatti*) are, in effect, one and the same¹⁰. This leads us to another important question as to what constitutes creation and destruction, according to Rāmānuja. This we shall deal with now.

4.5.1 CREATION IS DESTRUCTION, DESTRUCTION IS CREATION

The notions of creation and destruction are well brought out, according to Rāmānuja, in the *Bhagavadgītā* verse:

*jātasaya hi dhruvo mṛtyuh dhruvam janma
mṛtasya ca*¹¹.

Very freely translated, this verse would mean that what is created is destined to get destroyed and what is destroyed is bound to be created again¹².

9. *Nyāyasūtra*. V.i.35.

10. *S.P. on S.B.*, II.i.15.

11. *B.G.*, II.27

12. *T.C. on B.G.*, II.27

But Rāmānuja is of the view that this is not the import of the verse. Vedānta Deśika remarks that if the verse is taken in its literal sense then one need not take treatment for one's disease and need not grieve over the bereavement of one's own son, for what is created is destined to be destroyed and what is destroyed is bound to be created again. Hence this verse only means that creation and destruction are not two different things, but are one and the same. What is destruction for one form is creation for another form. A pot may be said to be destroyed, but that is the creation for pot-sherds, and destruction of pot-sherds will mean creation for pieces, and this goes on infinitely. In all these, matter stands conserved, according to the law of conservation of mass, and forms go on changing. And the *Viṣṇupurṇa* substantiates the same idea in the text.

*mahi-ghatatvam ghaṭataḥ kapālikā
kapālikā-cūrṇa-rajastato 'nuh¹³*

Thus, Rāmānuja observes that creation and destruction are none but the same substance attaining different forms or states. When the substance attains a particular form, it is said to be created, and when it attains a newer form, it is called destruction of the previous form, in which the matter is not totally annihilated, but exists in a different form. And the destruction of one is the creation of another.

*utpatti-vināśādayah sato dravyasya
avasthāviśeṣāḥ. utpatyākhyām avasthām*

upayātasya dravyasya tadvirodhi-avasthāntara prāptih vināśa ityucyate. mṛddravyasya piṇḍatva-ghaṭatva-kapālatva-cūrnatvādīvat pariṇāmidravyasya pariṇama-paramparā avarjanīyā. tatra pūrvāvathasya dravyasya uttarāvasthā prāptih vināśah. saiva tadavasthasya ca utpattiḥ¹⁴.

The above position of Rāmānuja leads us to another vital question. The view that the destruction of a substance means only the destruction of its form and that matter continues to exist in some other from, implies that there is no place for total non-existence in respect of matter, in the scheme of Rāmānuja. If that be the case there arises the question regarding the nature of existence (*sattva*) and non-existence (*asattva*).

4.5.2. DEFINITIONS OF *SATTVA* AND *ASATTVA*

According to Rāmānuja, *sattva* and *asattva* are two characteristics of the same substance. The *Nyāya* school holds that when something is said to be created it was totally non-existent prior to its creation and when it is destroyed, it is totally annihilated leaving out not even a trace of it, which is called *niranvayavināśa*.

According to Rāmānuja, however, it is not possible to bring forth anew what is totally non-existent; or to annihilate totally what is existent¹⁵. As discussed earlier, creation and destruction constitute only the change of state in the same

14 B.G.B.R., II.27

15 Ś.B., II.ii.21

substance.' Thus existence of something means existence of it in a particular form. And non-existence means destruction of that form. For instance, a pot is said to be existent when clay is made to have a disposition of parts such as a wide, round-natured bottom and a narrow neck. and when that form is destroyed, the pot is said to be non-existent. Thus when a pot attains to the state of pot-sherds, it is said that pot has been destroyed, but even there it is never noticed that there is something as the non-existence of pot, apart from the pot-sherds. Thus existence (*sattva*) and non-existence (*asattva*) are just two features of the same thing.

sattvāsattve hi dravyadharma-vyuktam. tatra sattvadharma-t arthāntaram asattvam... mṛddravyasya prthubudhna udarākāra-yogo ghaṭo'sti iti vyavahara-hetuḥ, tasyaiva tadvirodhi avasthāntara-yogo ghaṭo nāstīti vyavahara hetuḥ; tatra kapālādi avasthāyāḥ tadvirodhite saiva ghaṭāvasthasya nastīti vyavahāra hetuḥ; na ca tadvyatirikto ghaṭābhāvo nāma kaścit upalabhyate¹⁶.

Thus, according to Rāmānuja, total non-existence is an impossibility. Non-existence merely means the non-existence of an object in a particular form. Thus when *Upaniṣad*-s declare the world to be *asat* as

*asadeva idamagra āśit¹⁷
asadvā idamagra āśit¹⁸*

16. ibid., II.i 18.

17. *Ch.Up.*, VI.ii.1.

18. *Tai. Ānand.*, VII.1.

etc., they do not mean that the world was totally non-existent (during dissolution). On the other hand, they only mean that the world was not existent in the form in which it exists during the state of evolution. This view is confirmed by the author of the *sūtra*-s in the aphorism -

*asadvyapadeśanneti cenna dharmāntareṇa
vākyāśeṣat yukteḥ śabdāntarācca*¹⁹.

Rāmānuja is of the view that, to say that the world is existent (*sat*) means that it is associated with names and forms and to say that it is non-existent (*asat*) means that it exists in a state free from names and forms. That is, when the world exists in a subtle form without being differentiated into names and forms, it is said to be non-existent and when it is differentiated into names and forms it is said to be existent.

*idam śabda nirdiṣṭasya jagataḥ satvadharmaḥ
nāmrūpe; asattva-dharmastu tadvirodhinī
sūkṣmāvasthā. ato jagato nāmarūpayuktasya
tadvirodhi sukṣmadaśāpattiḥ asattvam.*²⁰

And it is in this vein that it is declared in the *Visnupurana* that whatever "is" is Viṣṇu and whatever 'is not' also is Viṣṇu:

*jyotiṁśi viṣṇuh bhuvanāni viṣṇuh
vanāni viṣṇuh girayo diśaśca
nadyah samudrāśca sa eva sarvam
yadasti yannāsti ca vīpravarya²¹*

In this verse the expression *sa eva sarvam* *yadasti yannasti ca* is the most significant. This

19. *B.S.*, II.i.18.

20. *S.B.* II.i.18

21. *V.P.*, II.ii.38.

verse names every entity and declares it to be one with Viṣṇu, for everything is 'only His body'²² and it ultimately concludes that everything that 'is' and 'is not' also is Viṣṇu.

Herein it is said that what is non-existent also is the body of Viṣṇu. This confirms the view of Rāmānuja that non-existence means only a state that is opposed to the state of existence.

From the foregoing discussion it would have become clear that every object is existent at all times in one form or another. As pointed out earlier, the cause and the effect are the same object existing in its antecedent and subsequent states. Rāmānuja upholds the view that Brahman is the cause of the world and this has already been dealt with²³. The *Nyāya-Vaisesika*-s hold that atoms are the cause and the *Sāṅkhya*-s hold that *pradhāna* is the cause. Rāmānuja refutes their views and establishes the causality of Brahman. We shall now set forth in some detail, Rāmānuja's refutation of the *Nyāya* and *Sāṅkhya* views and his views on Brahman's causality in respect of the world.

4.5.3. CAUSE OF THE WORLD- RĀMĀNUJA'S REFUTATION OF OTHERS' VIEWS

The basic view of the *Nyāya-Vaisesika* school is that the world is made up of atoms. This is

22 The view that everything is the body of Brahman is expressed in the *Viṣṇupurāṇa* itself at places like I.xxii.38, I.xxii.86 etc.

23 infra pp 85-88

because when matter is split again and again it reaches a stage of not admitting any split further. And the particle that is reached ultimately is called an atom. Thus, it is the atom that forms the basis of the world. This is the principal argument advanced by *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika-s* to prove that the ultimate causal substance is the atom²⁴. Another argument is also advanced to prove the above view. There are several big objects in the world, one thing being bigger than the other. And the ultimate limit is found in the sky. Likewise if we seek smaller and smaller objects, the process must come to an end and the size-smallness must culminate somewhere and this is the atom²⁵.

The *Sāṅkhyas*, on the other hand, hold that *pradhāna* is the cause of the world. Their argument in favour of this view is that the world is made up of objects that are of the form of pleasure, pain or delusion. Hence it follows that their causal substance also must be made up of the same factors. And the cause is *pradhāna*, which is constituted of the three *dravyas* called *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* which respectively represent pleasure, pain and delusion. All the three *dravya-s* constantly undergo transformation, and are in a state of dynamic equilibrium at the state of dissolution. When the equipoise is disturbed, the *pradhāna* functions to put forth its evolutes and there begins the evolution of the world. This, in brief, is the *Sāṅkhya* theory of creation. The view is based upon the *Sāṅkhyasmṛti* of Sage Kapila who propounded the *Sāṅkhya* system.

24. *Muktāvali*, p. 68.

25. Loc. cit.

Rāmānuja criticises both the above views on the ground that they are opposed to both scriptures and reasoning.

The *Sāṅkhya* view stands discredited by its denial of an efficient cause. According to it, the world is created out of *pradhāna* without the direction of any sentient being. And it is totally unintelligible. Never indeed is it observed in common parlance that an insentient matter acts of its own accord, to produce particular effects without being directed by a sentient being. Timber does not become a chariot of its own without the agency of a sentient being. On the contrary, it is seen that an insentient matter does proude its effects only when fashioned by workmen having intelligence. Another defect in the *Sāṅkhya* view is that *sattva*, etc., can never become the causes of the world, as they are known to be only qualities and not substances. And the *Sāṅkhya* is not justified in holding a contrary view without any valid basis²⁶.

Moreover the *Sāṅkhya* system itself is fraught with sevral intenal contrdictions. It is declared that an inexplicable *adhyāsa* between *prakṛti* and *puruṣa* is responsible for the world-process. But the nature of both the *prakṛti* and the *puruṣa* is accpted to be such that there is absolutely no possibility of the occurrence of *adhyāsa* between the two. In the first place, it is not possible in the case of *prakṛti* because it is insentient and hence incapable of functioning. And *puruṣa* in the system is said to be changeless, free from agency and of the form

26. Ś.B. II.ii.1.

of knowledge. Hence an *adhyāsa* is not possible in its case too. Hence the *Saṅkhya* view that the cause of the world is *pradhāna* is not sound.

The *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika*-s argue that the atoms constitute the cause of the world. And their arguments in favour of this view have been referred to already.

The basic view of Rāmānuja and also of all the *Vedāntin*-s is that Brahman is the cause, although they differ from one another in regard to the method of elucidating this theory. But all of them agree in rejecting the theory that atoms constitute the cause of the world, on several grounds.

Rāmānuja refutes the atomic theory on the following lines in the *Mahaddīrghādhikaraṇa*²⁷: the objects of the world are constructed out of the combination of parts of their causal elements. That is how smaller objects could give rise to bigger ones. So also atoms must produce the binary compounds (*dvyañuka*-s) only by combining through their parts. But the *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika*-s admit that the atom is partless. If that be the case, the combination of any number of atoms cannot produce something bigger in size than a single atom, for everything will coalesce into a single atom. To get over this difficulty if parts are admitted in respect of atoms, then it will not only go against the basic *Nyāya* position that atoms are partless, but also will lead to infinite regress. That is, if parts are admitted in the case of atoms, then it will mean that the parts have combined to form

27 ibid., II.ii.2

the atom. And the parts themselves should be admitted either as partless or being endowed with parts. If the former alternative were held, then the same defect that any number of parts cannot produce a bigger entity, will remain. And the admission of the latter alternative would give rise to the same objections pointed out above leading to infinite regress.

It may be argued that the distinction between a mountain and a mustard seed is due to the number of parts that they contain. If it is shown through arguments like the above that there would result infinite parts for each atom, then there will cease to be any distinction between the two, namely, mountain and mustard seed, as each will contain infinite parts. Hence in order to account for what is observed it must be accepted that the two are made of larger and smaller number of parts respectively. And that part which is the smallest of all, is the atom.

Rāmānuja replies that if atoms are accepted to be partless, then it will first be not possible to create a mountain or a mustard seed at all, out of it. Hence the view that atoms are the causal elements is not tenable²⁸.

4.5.4. THE CAUSE ACCORDING TO RĀMĀNUJA

According to Rāmānuja, the world is not created out of atoms. In fact the world does not consist of individually analizable parts which combine to form bigger ones. On the other hand,

28. ibid., II.ii.10.

the whole world forms a single continuum without any part of it remaining isolated. The question is not one of a 'small' giving rise to a 'big' but the other way around. It is the 'big' that creates the 'small'. In the *Śrutaprakāśika* it is stated:

*nahi alpena vipulasya utpattih. daśagunam
br̥hato brahmaṇah kāraṇādalpasya kāryatvam
hi pratipadyate*²⁹.

The world in its primordial state is called *prakṛti*. Though it is a material substance the scriptures speak of it as a power of Brahman³⁰. It forms the body of Brahman and remains in an undifferentiated condition at the state of *pralaya*. Therein it remains in such a subtle form in Brahman that it could as well be said that it does not exist.

..... *atyanta sūkṣmatayā asatkalpa
svalīlopakaraṇa cidacid-vastu-śarīratayā
tanmayah paramātmā* ³¹.

It is called by the name *tamas* then. And when Brahman wills, there takes place creation, during which process, Brahman, greatly expands this minuscule *tamas* to a gigantic size which then puts forth its evolutes. Thus creation is nothing but making the subtle into gross form and undifferentiated into differentiated.

Thus the universe is created not from atoms but from *prakṛti* which forms the body of Brahman, due to which it always remains inseparable from it.

29. *S.P. on S.B.*, II.II.10.

30. *S.B.*, I.I.1, Vol.1, p.218

31. *ibid.*, I.IV.27

Now there arises the following question: from the above, it would become clear that Rāmānuja accepts *prakṛti* as the cause of the world. And the position is very much akin to the *Sāṅkhya* view.

Rāmānuja observes that there is a marked difference between the two views. The *Sāṅkhya* accepts *prakṛti* as totally independent of *puruṣa*; while Rāmānuja holds it to be fully dependent upon Brahman, forming the body of the latter. Thus according to Ramanuja *prakṛti* as such, is not denied; what is denied is only its independence by not having Brahman as its inner-self.

*yadi bhūtasūkṣmam avyākṛtam
abhyupagamyate, kāpilatantra-siddhānta
upādāne kah pradveśah? tatrāpi hi
bhūtakāraṇameva avyaktam ityucyate.
tatrocye ... na vayam avyaktam
tatpariṇāma -viśeṣāṁśca svarūpeṇa
anabhyupagacchāmaḥ api tu
paramapuruṣa- sarīratayā tadātmakatva
virahena³².*

It is, therefore, fully justifiable according to Rāmānuja to say that Brahman is the material cause. This is because Brahman does not create the world by remaining outside the *prakṛti*. On the other hand, It remains immanent in *prakṛti* as its in-dweller and inner-controller, always pervading it. This has been discussed earlier³³.

32. ibid., I.iv.3.

33. infra. pp. 85-88

It is with this in view that the *Upaniṣad*-s instead of declaring that Brahman creates the world, declare that “Brahman creates Itself”.

*tadātmānam svayamakuruta*³⁴.

It may now be objected that if Brahman is admitted to be the material cause, there must be admitted some transformation in it, without which it is not possible to uphold its material causality. But the *Upaniṣad*-s clearly declare that Brahman is free from any change whatsoever. Further if Brahman is accepted to be the material cause of the world, then it will be subject to all the defects found in the world.

Rāmānuja observes that there is no room for the above objections. The *Upaniṣad*-s declare Brahman to be of a unique nature endowed with infinite powers and perfections which are incomprehensible by the human intellect. And it is the very nature of Brahman to be the material cause of the world and yet to remain unsullied by any of its defects. Further the author of the *Brahmasūtra*-s advocates the theory of transformation in the aphorism *parināmāt*³⁵. Rāmānuja explains that the transformation that is spoken of here does not involve any defect to Brahman but only adds to its glory. This is because, it is a unique type of transformation wherein there is actual change only in the mode and not in the substantive. And the *Upaniṣad* seeks to illustrate this through the instance of the spider spinning its cob-web. The spider secretes

34. *Tai. Ānand.*, VII.1.

35. *B.S.*, I.iv. 27.

and absorbs its thread from its body without itself undergoing any change. The change here is confined only to the thread. Likewise when Brahman creates the world, the transformation is confined to its mode, which constitutes *prakrti* in its undifferentiated form.

Vedānta Deśika explains the view in the *Adhikaranasārāvali* thus:

*mṛtpiṇḍādeḥ kulalaprabhṛtirihaprthak
tadvadevādikartā*

*nopādānam vikārairvirahita iti
na dvāramātre. vikārāt*

*mṛddṛṣṭāntādimātrānnaca vikṛtirasau
syāt parasya svarūpe*

dehadvārorṇanābhīprabhṛti

vikṛtivad vyāprterdarśitatvāt³⁶.

(It is found in the world that potter, weaver and others who are the efficient causes for pot, cloth, etc., are seen to be different from the respective material causes - clay, threads, etc. So also Brahman which is said to be the primordial cause can only become the efficient cause and not the material cause, for It is declared to be free from transformation. But this objection does not hold good in the case of Brahman, because though there is transformation, it is limited only to the mode. Again just because the *Upaniṣad*-s cite the instances like clay, etc., which are transformed

into pot, etc., it cannot be construed that there is transformation in the essential nature of Brahman, for the exact status of Brahman is explained in the example of a spider spinning its cob-web without itself undergoing any change whatsoever.)

The order of dissolution spoken of in the *Upaniṣad*-s also clearly precludes any transformation in the essential nature of Brahman, according to Rāmānuja. The *Subālopaniṣad*, for instance, speaks of *laya* in the following way:

*prthivyapsu pralīyate āpastejasi līyante
tejo vayau līyate bhūtadir mahati
līyate., mahān avyakte līyate. avyaktam
akṣare līyate. akṣaram tamasi līyate. tamah
pare deve ekībhavati³⁷*

Here every entity is said to undergo *laya* in its antecedent entity, starting from *prthivi* upto *tamas*. But *tamas* is said to become 'one' with Brahman (*ekībhavati*) and there it is not said to be *laya*. And Rāmānuja makes a pointed reference to the distinction in the use of the words *laya* and *ekībhāva* in the *Upaniṣad*³⁸. When *prthivi* completely leaves its form and becomes *ap* then it is *laya* and such a *laya* goes on for each entity upto *tamas*. But *tamas* is not said to undergo *laya* in Brahman but is only said to become one with It meaning thereby that it becomes indistinguishable from Brahman and is not totally dissolved in it. And Rāmānuja observes that the author of the aphorisms makes it clear that though at the state

37. *Sub. Up.* II.

38. *S.B.*, I.iv.27.

of dissolution, when both *cit* and *acit* entities become one with Brahman, they still remain in their subtle forms indistinguishable from Brahman, wherein the *jīva-s* remain associated with all their *karma-s*. The aphorism is:

*na karma avibhāgād iticenna anāditvāt
upapadyate cāpyupalabhyate ca³⁹.*

Thus though the author of the *Brahmasūtra-s* advocates the *parināmavāda*, yet it is not analogous to worldly instances like clay, etc., but is something unique where there is change, only in the mode, and not in the substantive.

Thus, according to Rāmānuja, Brahman is the *upadānakāraṇa*, but yet it does not involve any change in its essential nature.

Brahman, in fact, is not only the material cause but also the efficient cause which is another unique feature about It. In fact, the *Upaniṣad-s* consistently maintain the view that Brahman is both the material and the efficient cause of the world and yet remains unaffected by the defects of the world- its effect.

Rāmānuja quotes extensively from the *Mahābhārata*, the *Bhagavadgītā*, the *Viṣṇupurāṇa* and *smṛti-s* like *Manusmṛti*, in support of this view. All these texts uniformly convey that there is body-soul relation between the world and Brahman and that Brahman is the material, as well as the efficient cause of the world without losing its changeless character⁴⁰.

39. *B.S.*, II. i. 35.

40. *S.B.* I.iv.27, II.i.1, II.i. 28.

Thus, in the view of Rāmānuja, Brahman associated with *cit* and *acit* in their subtle forms is the cause and Brahman associated with *cit* and *acit* in their gross forms is the effect. It is thus that the promissory statement ‘by knowing one every thing becomes known’ becomes meaningful for, the cause and the effect are the same entity in their two different dispositions. The implication of the statement is that by knowing the cause the effect becomes known.

4.5.5. CAN CAUSALITY OF BRAHMAN BE REPUDIATED

The author of the *Brahmasūtra*-s devotes the first *pada* of the second *adhyāya* to the elucidation of the position that the *Brahmakāraṇavāda* established in the first *adhyāya* cannot be repudiated. He meets several objections that could be anticipated or actually raised by the opponents.

Among the objections, three stand out to be important. One is: there cannot be cause-effect relation between two entities which have entirely different natures. Brahman is said to be the cause of the world. It is of the form of consciousness and bliss, while the world is insentient and the source of all miseries. And there cannot be cause-effect relation between the entities possessing mutually contrary natures.

The second objection is: the nature of Brahman as has been enunciated in the scriptures does not admit of material causality without involving contradiction.

And the third one is related to the purpose of creation. We shall now discuss these questions in some detail:

4.5.5.1 CAN CAUSE AND EFFECT BE ALTOGETHER DIFFERENT ?

The above question is raised by the *Sāṅkhyas*. The basis of the objection is that it is observed in the world that although the cause and effect are different in regard to their specific dispositions, yet they are identical in so far as their material is concerned. The *siddhāntin* argues that cause and effect are the same *dravya* with different disposition of parts. The implication of this argument is: it is noticed in ordinary experience that clay is the material cause for pot, and gold is the material cause for ornament. Though, for practical purposes clay and pot or gold and a bangle made out of it may be viewed as different, yet the basic substance remains the same in both the cause and the effect. In other words, that aspect, goldness (say), which distinguishes gold from the other things, continues to exist very much in the effect, namely, bangle too. And this is called **similarity of natures** (*sālakṣṇya*) between the cause and the effect which is noticed in the cases of clay and pot, etc.

*yena svabhāvena kāraṇabहūtam vastu
vastvantarāt vyāvṛttam tasya svabhāvasya
tatkarye'pi anuvṛttiḥ karye kāraṇa
sālaksanyam⁴¹*

41. ibid., II.i.4.

However if Brahman is accepted to be the cause of the world, the rule is found to be violated, since the characteristics of the two are distinct. On the other hand, if *pradhāna* is accepted to be the cause, there is no violation of the rule. Hence the causality of Brahman cannot be accepted, for there is no ground to accept a violation of the said rule.

If Brahman - the Sentient Being were accepted to be the cause of the world - the insentient one, then the rule that the cause and the effect must share the same characteristics, would stand violated. If, however *pradhāna* were held to be the cause of the world, then there is no violation of the said rule, as both *pradhāna*-the cause, and the world -the effect, have the common feature of insentience.

From this it emerges that Brahman cannot be accepted to be the cause of the world without violating the above rule. Now the question arises as to whether there could be a violation of this rule at all.

The author of the aphorisms sets aside the objection on two grounds. The first one is that the rule deduced above is not universally applicable and exceptions are found even in worldly instances. The second one is that there is actually no violation of the rule in so far as the view that Brahman is the cause of the world, is concerned.

To be explicit: it is observed in ordinary experience that totally new effects spring from causes that do not share any distinctly common features with them. For instance, scorpions are seen to be created from cow-dung and certain

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insects are created from the bodies of flies. In these cases the said rule is found to be violated.

It may be contended that cow-dung is not the cause for the sentience of the scorpion but only for its insentient body and similarly the material body of the fly alone is the cause for the material body of the insect. Still there is clear violation of the rule. That is, whatever feature that exclusively characterises cow-dung or a fly is not seen to pervade the scorpion or the insect. Hence it cannot be laid down as a rule that there should be similarity of characteristics between the cause and the effect⁴². On this basis Brahman's causality towards the world could well be explained.

Nevertheless, Bādarāyaṇa adds that this is not the case. There is indeed no violation of the said rule which is well-framed on the following ground:

Brahman - the Pure Being is not said to be the cause, but it is Brahman associated with *cit* and *acit* in their subtle forms that is said to be the cause. And the effect again is Brahman in association with the same *cit* and *acit* in their gross forms. In the ultimate analysis the similarity of characteristics between cause and effect is well maintained and hence the objection does not arise at all.

Instances of exceptions were pointed out just to show that the rule is not universally applicable and it does not mean that the rule is violated when Brahman is accepted to be the cause of the world⁴³.

42. ibid., II.i.6.

43. B.S., II.i.7.

4.5.5.2 DOES MATERIAL CAUSALITY OF BRAHMAN INVOLVE CONTRADICTION?

The second objection is: how could Brahman become the material cause of the world. A material cause is that which undergoes transformation in its essential nature. If the same is to be applicable in the case of Brahman, then two alternatives suggest themselves and both of them are riddled with difficulties. That is, Brahman has to be accepted either as partless or as endowed with parts. If the former is accepted, then being the material cause, Brahman in its entirety should become the world. To get over this, if it is admitted that only a part of Brahman changes in the form of the world, then it would result in admitting Brahman as endowed with parts; and, this would force us to give up the Upaniṣadic view that Brahman is partless. Thus to either of the views there are difficulties. It may, however, be contended that Brahman is accepted to be the cause only as associated with *cit* and *acit* entities in their subtle forms and hence there would arise no difficulty. It is because though Brahman remains as the material cause, it is said to be changeless as change is exclusively related to the attributes and not to the substantive which remains changeless. Nevertheless, the objection is against the alleged changelessness itself, of the substantive. That is, though Brahman is said to be the cause in its substantial form, yet, as Brahman in its totality is accepted to become the effect, it cannot logically leave out the substantive due to which it cannot be maintained to be changeless⁴⁴.

44. S.B., II.i. 26.

Bādārāyaṇa, however, replies that the said objection could not arise because of the transcendental nature of Brahman. It is a concept to be known exclusively through scriptures, which declare it as defying all logic and as endowed with unimaginable powers⁴⁵.

The *Viṣṇupurāṇa*, for instance, raises the same objection and replies that Brahman is something which is simply beyond the realm of human intellect where there is no room for mundane logic.

*nirguṇasyāprameyasya
śuddhasyāpyamalātmanah
katham sargādikartrtvam brahmaṇo’
bhypagamyate
śaktayah sarvabhāvānām acintya
jñānagocarāḥ
yato’to brahmaṇastāstu sargādyā
bhāvaśaktayah
bhavanti tapatām śreṣṭha pāvakasya
yathoṣṇatā⁴⁶*

(Maitreya enquires:) Brahman is free from any of the characteristics that could account for its being viewed as a cause. It is incomprehensible, pure and unsullied (that is, free from *karma*-s). How could Brahman of such nature, be the cause of the creation, etc., of the world?

(Parasara replies:) Every entity is endowed with unique powers in regard to which there is no scope

45. B.S., II.i.27.

46. V.P., I.iii.1,2

for reasoning. They have to be known exclusively through the *pramāṇa*-s that comprehend them. For instance, fire has the capacity to burn; and in regard to this there cannot arise any question as to how it could burn by being a “*dravya*” etc. It is simply the nature of fire to burn. Likewise it is the unique power of Brahman to be the cause of creation, etc., of the world, (without undergoing any change).

It may still be contended that even scriptures cannot teach something which is contrary to perception such as, “Drench with fire”. But the reply is that the causality of Brahman cannot be equated with instances like the above. In the above instance there is direct contradiction observed through another *pramāṇa* - perception. But in the case of Brahman, it is a concept, to be known purely through scriptures and It never comes within the range of any other *pramāṇa*. When that is the case it is only but proper that Its nature is admitted as enunciated in the *sruti*.

srutesū śabdamūltvāt⁴⁷.

What the author of the *sutra*-s conveys in this aphorism and in another one

tarkāpratiṣṭhanadapi⁴⁸

is of profound significance. It must first clearly be laid down whether philosophical speculation is based purely on reasoning or on any other source of knowledge, as for instance, *śabda* as in the present case. If it is the former, then it has to

47. B.S, II.i.27

48. ibid., i.11

be carried on to its fullest extent, without any concern for contradiction with any other *pramāṇa*, in which case it could be seen that it will land us nowhere. If on the other hand, any other *pramāṇa* is accepted as the basis, then it means at once that a compromise is made with reasoning. In that case it should not be stressed too much that the other *pramāṇa* which professedly concerns itself with trans-empirical things should conform to our mode of reasoning. It should rather be that reasoning should conform and adapt itself to the other *pramāṇa*. And it is observed in this vein by Manu also as

*ārṣam dharmopadeśam ca vedaśāstra
avirodhinā
yastarkenānusandhatte sa dahrmaṁ veda
netarḥ⁴⁹*

In other words, there is no denying of the fact that philosophical thought, whatever its source of knowledge is, should be necessarily corroborated by reasoning. But it should be utilised only to that extent so as to build a satisfactory system without any internal contradictions. And it is not proper to accept a part from some other means of knowledge and then employ exclusive reasoning to point out contradictions. In other words what is trans-logical need not be illogical.

49. M.S., XII.106.

4.5.5.3 CAN THERE BE A PURPOSE FOR BRAHMAN CREATING THE WORLD ?

The third objection raised concerns with whether Brahman is motivated by some purpose in the creation of the world or not. It cannot be said that there is no purpose for creation, for purposeless action cannot be attributed to any meaningful being. But in the case of Brahman it cannot also be said that It is motivated by some purpose. This is because the purpose should be either for Its own self or for some others(the *jīva-s*). The former alternative is not possible because Brahman is said to be one which has no unfulfilled desires; It is *avāptasamastakāma*.

And it cannot be for the purpose of the *jīva-s* also. This is because the world is full of miseries and no compassionate being will create a world consisting of misery for the purpose of others. If at all it is for others' purpose, it should have been created as a pleasurable world, free from misery.

The reply, however, is that creation is the sport of Brahman. In the case of those like princes, who have no desire that is yet to be fulfilled, it is seen that they do indulge in sportive activities for which there is no apparent purpose other than enjoying the pleasure of playing. Similarly creation, etc., are the mere sportful activities of Brahman. But yet it is carried out with due regard for moral justice.

That is, though creation is a mere sportful activity for Brahman, it is not done in a capricious manner. The world is created in such a way that the *jīva-s* could perform deeds and reap their fruits.

Hence Brahman creates the world only according to the merits and demerits of *jīva-s*. Hence the miseries of the world are only the fruits of the past deeds of *jīva-s*, because Brahman creates the world only as guided by their *karma-s*. Hence one cannot express an unfavourable judgement that Brahman has positive pleasure in creating the world with misery, as the latter is only the result of the actions of the soul.

Śrī Maṇvālamāmuni, however suggests in his gloss on the *Tattvatraya* of Śrī Pillailokācārya that release of the souls from bondage also is a purpose of creation⁵⁰. But *līla* or sport is suggested only because, that is more predominant. It is like this: Brahman, being omnipotent could simply liberate all the souls by Its mere will. Still Brahman creates the world and expects the souls to attain liberation in the way shown in the *śāstra-s*, only because of Its desire for the sport. It is because of this that creation is suggested as a mere sport, though it does have the purpose of releasing the souls also. In the language of Dr. Radhakrishnan, '*samsāra* is a succession of spiritual opportunities'.

4.6 IS THE WORLD A MERE ILLUSION?

From the foregoing discussion, it emerges that the world according to Rāmānuja is not a mere illusion but a reality in itself.

But the *Advaitin* has advanced several arguments to show that the world is only an

50. *Tattvatraya-Īśvarapariccheda*, *sūtra-21*, p.144.

illusory appearance in Brahman and not a reality. According to him it is the product of *avidyā* or *māyā*, which is not determinable either as *sat* or as *asat*. It could be removed through right knowledge, which again confirms the view that it is only illusory. What is opposed to knowledge could only be absence of knowledge or illusion and not some real object.

According to Rāmānuja, however, the world could not be proved to be illusory. He points out several defects in the arguments of the *Advaitin* and proves that they cannot prove the illusoriness of the world.

The *Advaitin* has argued that the process of creation set forth in the *Upaniṣad-s* is not uniform which shows that *Upaniṣad-s* do not really favour creation itself. This is because everything, excepting Brahman is illusory⁵¹.

But according to Rāmānuja, there is no discrepancy at all. It is true that the *Taittariya* declares the creation of *ākāśa* first, whereas the *Chāndogya* declares the creation of *tejas* first, leaving off the creation of *ākāśa* and *vāyu*. But that is not a discrepancy. The *Chāndogya* starts with the creation of the *mūrtadravya*, namely, *tejas* which has a material shape, while the *Taittariya* from *amūrtadravya*, namely, *ākāśa* which does not have any material shape. The omission of the creation of *ākāśa* in the *Chāndogya* text could thus be accounted for. And in the *Chāndogya* itself it is declared that it is *sat* that is the cause of all entities, which does not leave off *ākāśa*. And

51. *infra.* pp. 152-154

the promissory statement in the *Chāndogya* itself - *ekavijñānenā sarvavijñānam* presupposes the fact that *ākāśa* too is created from Brahman.

Moreover, it can be said that there is discrepancy only if the order itself is changed in one particular *Upaniṣad*. That is, if it is declared that *tejas* is created and then *akasa* is created from that, then it can be said to be a clear discrepancy. But in the instance pointed out, the order of creation is very much maintained and there is mere omission of one or two entities, which cannot be said to be a discrepancy at all.

Thus we see that there is no discrepancy and so the arguement that the order of creation mentioned in different *Upaniṣad*-s is not uniform, cannot prove that creation is only illusory.

Another arguement advanced is that even dream objects, which are illusory, are stated to be created. Hence, just merely because the *Upaniṣad*-s state the world to be created, it cannot be held to be real⁵².

Rāmānuja points out here that the dream objects themselves are not illusory. He argues that the fact of their being declared as created by Brahman, is itself an adequate proof of their reality. The difference between the views of the *Advaitin* and Rāmānuja lies in this: the *Advaitin* presupposes the illusoriness of the objects of dream and argues that reference to the creation of the latter in *Upaniṣad*-s is not a valid evidence for the reality of the created objects. But Rāmānuja

52. *Loc cit*

takes the statement of ‘creation’ as a valid evidence to show the reality of the dream objects.

The *Advaitin*, however, contends that the author of the *Brahmasūtra*-s has termed the objects of dream as *māyā* in the aphorism

*māyāmātram tu kārtsnyena anabhivyakta
svarūpatvāt⁵³*

and hence they are only illusory.

Rāmānuja observes that it is true that the author of the *Brahmasūtra*-s refers to the dream objects as *māyāmātram*, but it does not mean them to be illusory. It is because the term *māyā* does not convey the sense of illusoriness. An analysis of the *sandhyādhikaraṇa* where the term *māyā* is used in respect of dream objects and also the usage of the term *māyā* found elsewhere shows that the term does not signify illusoriness. This we shall now discuss in some detail.

4.6.1 ON THE MEANING OF THE TERM MĀYĀ: THE SANDHYĀDHIKARAṄA

This *adhikaraṇa* occurs in the second *pāda* of the third *adhyāya* of the *Brahmasūtra*-s. The *adhikaraṇa* discusses the *Brhadāraṇyaka* passage wherein dream objects are said to be created. The passage under discussion is:

*na tatra rathāḥ na rathayogāḥ na panthāno
bhavanti. atha rathān rathayogān pathāḥ
srjate. na tatra ānandā mudāḥ pramudo
bhavanti, atha ānandān mudāḥ pramudāḥ
srjate..... sa hi kartā⁵⁴*

53. B.S., III.ii.3.

54. Br.Up., VI. iii.10

Here the question arises, whether the soul is to be viewed as the creator, or God.

The *pūrvapakṣin* holds that it is the soul, since it that which is referred to in the passage as *sa hi karta*. The passage speaks about creation of the objects of the dream-world and it is that which is referred to here.

The *siddhāntin*, however holds that it is only God who creates the dream objects, and that is declared in the aphorism -

*māyāmātram tu kārtsnyena anabhivyakta
svarūptvāt*

(dream objects are created by God, because of their wondrous nature; and the wonder lies in the fact of their not being open to be experienced by all)

Here the author of the aphorism declares the objects of dream as *māyāmātra* which means that they are wondrous - *āścaryarūpa*. It is precisely on this ground they are stated to be created by God.

And the wonder lies in the fact that they have been so created that their enjoyment is confined to the particular time of dreaming and is exclusive to the particular soul who dreams and not to others - *kārtsnyena anabhivyakta-svarūptvāt*. Thus the term *māyāmātra* is cited as the reason to prove that the dream-world is a creation of God. Hence the term *māyā* is used here only in the sense of a "wondrous power" - *āścaryakara* and not in the sense of illusoriness. Just like the world experienced during waking state is "wondrous" and

hence is the creation of God, so also, the dream-world is surpassing and hence it must be a creation of God. Infact the Upaniṣadic passage *na tatra rathāḥ*, etc., itself is meant to elucidate the wondrous nature. It first states that there are no chariots, or horses or the roads and then observes, "He creates all these". Here it is obvious that the chariots, etc., are not there at the time of dreaming and hence it need not be stated by the passage. Still, it has been stated in order to convey something else. Actually, the order of the passages has to be changed in order to arrive at its exact significance. The purport is that "all objects of dream like chariot etc., are created and yet they are not there". And that precisely constitutes the wonder about dreams. They have been created and yet they are not there, means that they do not exist in such a way as to be enjoyed by one and all and even by the person who dreams, after waking up.

And this is the significance of the term *māyā* used by the author of the *sūtra*-s. The latter then offers the explanation by stating *kārtsnyena anabhivyakta-svarūpatvāt*.

Further it could be seen clearly that the *Advaitin*'s interpretation of the *adhikarana* could not be justified. According to Śaṅkara, this *adhikarana* discusses whether the creations during the dream-world are real like the waking state or just illusory.

*kim prabodha iva svapne 'pi pāramārthikī⁵⁵
srstih āhosvinmāyāmayīti*

55. B.S.S.B., III.ii.1.

And he concludes that they are only illusory (*māyā*) and not real, like the objects of the waking state.

But the problem lies in the fact that even the world experienced during the waking state is also *māyā*, according to *Advaita* and hence there can be no distinction between the two. It may, however, be contended that the dream-objects are intended to be proved as *prātibhāsika*, which are different from the empirically real (*vyāvahārika*) world during the waking state. This will be possible only if the term *māyā* has the sense of *prātibhāsika* which is not accepted by the Advaitin too. If that is accepted, there will be no distinction between the waking and dream states⁵⁶.

Further more, the term *māyā* is found to be used only in the sense of “wondrous power” or knowledge in both the vedic and the classical literature and not in the sense of illusoriness or *anirvacaniyatva*.

For instance in the *mantra-s* of the *Rgveda*, the term *māyā* is interpreted as “knowledge” or “power”. The word *māyā* in the passage

*astabhnānmāyayā dyāmavastraśah*⁵⁷

Śayana interprets as *prājñayā upāyena iti*.

Again while interpreting the *mantra*
*daśānāmindro māyayā*⁵⁸

56. G.S. on S.B., Vol.1, p.854.

57. *Rgveda*, IV. xvii.5.

Sāyana gives the meaning of the expression *māyayā*, as *svakīyayā śaktyā*.

And Śaṅkara himself, while commenting on the passage *indro māyābhīḥ pururūpa īyate*⁵⁹, initially interprets the term *māyābhīḥ* as *prajñābhīḥ*:

The Nirukta again records the meaning of the term *māyā* as knowledge - *māyā vayunam abhikhyā*⁶⁰.

The *Rāmāyaṇa* while describing the beauty of Sītā uses the term *māyā* and it is in the sense of "wondrous power".

*janakasya kule jātā devamāyeva nirmitā*⁶¹.

(Born in the family of Janaka, she (Sītā) seems as though created out of the wondrous power of God),

In the *Viśupurāṇa* too, it is used in an identical sense

*tenamāyāsaḥasram tacchambarasyāśugāminā bālasya rakṣtā deham ekaikaśyena sūditam*⁶²

(The innumerable powers directed by Śambara against Prahlāda, were shattered into several pieces by the swift-moving disc - Sudarśana employed to keep Prahlada secure from the attack.)

58. *ibid.*, IV.xxx.21

59. *Br.Up.*, IV.v.19

60. *Nighantu*. III.9.

61. *Rāmāyaṇa*, *Bāla Kāṇḍa*, I.16

62. *V.P.* I.xix.20

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In these instances it is evident that the term *māyā* cannot have the sense of illusoriness.

Thus the word is often-times used only in the sense of "knowledge" or "wondrous power" and not in the sense of illusoriness. That being the case, the world cannot be termed to be illusory on the basis of the usage of the term *māyā* in certain scriptural passages.

To sum up the whole discussion: the world is real; dream objects too are real. They are referred to by the term - *māyā* and the significance of the term is only wondrous power. The world, therefore, is not an indeterminable entity as the Advaitin thinks. It is the body of Brahman. In the state of dissolution it remains in a latent form, namely, *prakṛti* in Brahman and at the time of creation it gets itself transformed in the form of the world. The *jīva* too is the body of Brahman. At the time of creation it comes to be associated with a specific body. The *ghaṭaka-śruti-s* declare that the world and the *jīva-s* constitute the body of Brahman and the latter is the self of the two. This is a stronger ground on the basis of which Rāmānuja concludes that the world being the body of Brahman is real.

CHAPTER V

THE NATURE AND MEANS OF LIBERATION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of philosophical enquiry as far as the Indian tradition is concerned, is to achieve the highest goal of human endeavour, namely *mokṣa*, which is liberation from the trammels of *samsara*. According to some schools, like the *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* etc., *mokṣa* constitutes just the cessation of all sufferings. The *Upaniṣad*-s, however, speak about *mokṣa*, as a state which is characterized by the enjoyment of positive bliss. But within the *Upaniṣadic* tradition, there are differences of opinion regarding what exactly constitutes *mokṣa* and also the means of attaining it.

According to Śaṅkara, *mokṣa* constitutes the removal of the illusory *avidyā* and the soul remaining in its natural state as Brahman. And the means to attain this, is right knowledge, that arises from the *mahāvākyā*-s of the *Upaniṣad*-s.

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Rāmānuja, however, is of the opinion that scriptures do not favour an idealistic view, which holds the world to be an illusory appearance, and the soul to be non-different from Brahman. On the other hand, according to him, scriptures speak of Brahman as radically different from the soul. And his view has already been discussed in detail, while discussing the Nature of Reality. Accordingly *mokṣa* in his view is, the soul becoming free from the influence of *karma*-s, regaining its Godly qualities, which were remaining concealed due to *karma*-s, and enjoying supreme bliss in the company of God after attaining His world.

And the means of attaining the same is *upāsanā* or meditation, carried on with a sense of loving devotion to God, who finally bestows the fruit of *mokṣa*, being pleased with the aspirant. In this chapter, we shall deal with the nature and means of liberation according to Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja.

5.2 ŚĀNKARA'S VIEW

5.2.1 THE NATURE OF LIBERATION

Liberation, according to Śaṅkara consists in the soul shedding all its false notions and remaining in its natural state as Brahman. The false notions are *kartṛtva*, *bhoktṛtva* and *paramātṛtva*, by being associated with which, the soul suffers bondage, as it were. And to get liberated is to get freed from these factors.

It can be ascertained from the *Upaniṣad*-s that the above is the concept of liberation. The *Upaniṣad*-s declare liberation as the soul remaining as Brahman itself. They further state that it is not something to be attained at a different place and time, but is one that is attained here and now.

It is obvious that if two entities are totally different, one cannot become the other. Hence the declaration '*brahma veda brahmaiva bhavati*'¹ cannot be taken to mean that the soul becomes Brahman. When read along with passages such as *tattvamasi*², *ayamātma brahma*³ and the like which state that the 'soul is Brahman', the above passage also means that that the 'soul remains as Brahman'. And the declarations that 'the soul attains liberation here itself' emphasises the above fact.

Further the scriptures declare knowledge as the instrument that brings about liberation. The function of knowledge is to remove ignorance.

1. *Muṇḍ.*, *Up.*, III.ii.8.
2. *Ch. Up.*, VI.viii.7.
3. *Br. Up.*, VI.iv.5

Thus it is clear that liberation lies in the removal of ignorance. Nothing need be performed over and above this to effectuate *mokṣa*. When a gem has lost its glitter due to the gathering of dust, it is sufficient to cleanse it by removing the dust. It would then shine forth in its natural state, of its own accord. In the same way when ignorance is removed from the soul, the latter would manifest in its own true nature as Brahman; and this is liberation.

Thus liberation is not something to be attained in a hereafter but is one which is attained here and now, since it is only becoming aware of what is already existent.

5.2.2 THE CONCEPT OF *JĪVANMUKTI*

As a corollary of the above position, it follows that *mokṣa* is something which could be effectuated immediately even when one is in this bodily existence, which is called *Jīvanmukti*. Since shedding of false ideas and notions is what counts, it does not matter even if the physical body continues. As far as the particular *jīva* is concerned, he is liberated, the moment, he has a profound inward realisation about his true nature as Brahman⁴. The *Upaniṣad* declares that the moment when there occurs the realisation, the knot of the heart is untied, all the lingering doubts are dispelled and all the *karma*-s are destroyed⁵.

4. *na brahmajñānamātram sāṁsārikadharma
nivṛttikāraṇam; api tu sākṣātkāraparyantam*
- *Bhāmati*, I.i.4.

5. *Muṇḍ. Up.*, II.ii.8.

Saṁsāra or transmigratory existence is only the superimposition of the characteristics such as agency, enjoyership and knowership upon the soul. These are only illusory and hence are removable by knowledge. Once these are removed through knowledge, bondage comes to an end for the particular soul. Still the physical body continues by the force of the *prārabdhakarma-s*, which however do not have the efficacy to bind the soul any more. It is like a wheel continuing to rotate even after the force applied to it has been stopped. It will continue for some time and come to a natural halt when the power of the force ceases. So also, in the case of an enlightened being, he is practically liberated (*mukta*) in as much as, he has shed the false notion of bodily existence itself and as such he cannot be said to be embodied⁶. So he is called a *jīvanmukta*.

6. *na avagata brahmātmabhāvasya yathāpūrvam saśrīratvam śakyam kalpayitum, vedapramājanātā brahmātmabhāva-virodhāt. sarire patite aśarīratvam syāt na jīvata iti cenna, saśarīratvasya mithyājñānanimittatvāt. nahi ātmanah sarīrātmābhīmānalakṣaṇam mithyājñānam muktva anyathā saśarīratvam śakyam kalpayitum. nityam aśarīratvam akarmanimittavāt ityavocāma.*

- B.S.S.B., I.i.4.

yadi vāstavam sarīratvam bhavet na jīvatastannivarteta, mithyājñānanimittam tu tat. tacca utpanna tattvajñānenā jīvatapi śakyam nivartayitum.

- Bhāmati I.i.4.

5.2.3 MEANS OF LIBERATION

5.2.3.1 KNOWLEDGE - THE SOLE MEANS TO LIBERATION

According to the *Mīmāsā* school, *mokṣa* is attained through the performance of *karma*-s ordained in the scriptures. But according to *Advaita*, though performance of śāstric *karma*-s and practice of *upāsanā* may help one to purify one's mind, it is only knowledge that ultimately removes *avidyā* and thus becomes the direct means. According to some philosophers like Bhāskara and Yādavaprakāśa, a union of *karma* and *jñāna* constitutes the means of liberation. But *Advaita* altogether repudiates the theory on several grounds.

Karma according to *Advaita*, is inherently incapable of removing ignorance, since it involves difference in its very nature and as such it is opposed to the liberating knowledge.

The liberating knowledge is not the mere textual knowledge but one which culminates in a direct realisation of one's non-difference with Brahman. But this could not be achieved, so long as the impressions of difference are not completely destroyed. Performance of *karma*, however, works just against this end, as it generates more and more impressions of difference. Due to this direct conflict there cannot be any association between *jñāna* and *karma*.

Again the fruits of *karma*-s are declared to be non-eternal whereas that of *jñāna* is said to be eternal. This also shows that there can be no association between the two.

Further the accessories prescribed for the liberating knowledge also preclude any possible association between *jñāna* and *karma*. The accessories are *sama*, *dama*, etc. All these involve restraint and control of senses, which will be totally lost if one performs *karma*-s.

The scriptures also proclaim knowledge as the sole means.

*tamevan vidvān amṛta iha bhavati; nānyah
panthā ayanāya vidyate⁷.*

Hence *jñāna* is exclusively the means and not *jñāna* in association the *karma*.

Due to similar considerations, even *dhyāna* or *upāsanā* also cannot be said to be a means along with *jñāna*. The declaration that *jñāna* alone is the means precludes not only *karma* but also *upāsanā* as the means.

Further the passage *brahma veda brahmaiva bhavati*⁸ expresses the immediacy of the occurrence of liberation as soon as there arises the right knowledge. It thus does not allow any intervening factor between the two. The above declaration is similar to the statement, ‘He stands and sings’ (*tiṣṭhan gāyati*), wherein there is no act in-between the two acts of standing and singing. If *upāsanā* were to be the means, there should first be knowledge, then there should be the practice of *upsanā*, based on it, which will ultimately lead to the fruit of liberation. But this, however, cannot be the case since *jñāna* alone has been declared to be the direct means.

7. *Tai. Ar.*, III.xii.17.

8. *Mund*, *Up.*III.ii.8.

Śaṅkara draws a clear line of distinction between *jñāna* and *upāsanā*, although both are only mental functions. That is, *upāsanā* is a form of mental activity which could be done or not done, or done in different ways, depending upon the will of the person who does it. Hence it is called *puruṣatantra*. In the case of knowledge, however, the case is entirely different. Its rise is not under the control of a person, nor is it a mental activity.

When the sense-organ is functional, the mind is alert and when all other conditions for the rise of knowledge are fully satisfied, it shall arise irrespective of whether one wishes to have it or not; and this also cannot be had in a distorted fashion at one's will. It is therefore called *vastutantra*. Thus, though *jñāna* and *upāsanā* are mental functions, yet the two are markedly different⁹.

Hence if *upāsanā* were admitted to be the direct means of liberation, it will tantamount to relegating the texts that speak of knowledge as the direct means of liberation, to a secondary position, which is not warranted. Hence knowledge is the exclusive means of liberation.

The above position, however, does not mean that there is no place for *karma* and *upāsanā* in the scheme of practical discipline in *Advaita*. They are very much needed as preliminaries to prepare the mind of the aspirant.

According to *Advaita*, it is the direct realization of the identity between the soul and Brahman, which arises from the *mahāvākha*-s like *tattvamasi*

9. B.S.S B., I.i.4.

etc., that removes bondage. The said knowledge does not arise by a mere textual reading. This is because, bondage is beginningless, and the impressions of difference which are innumerable, remain deeply ingrained in every soul. Hence, till all the impressions of duality are wiped off, the aspirant's mind will not be in a position to receive that the instruction of non-duality between the soul and Brahman is valid.

Karma and *upāsanā* are thus ordained in the scriptures as factors conducive to achieve this end. *Karma-s* which are performed without any attachment for their fruits, destroy sins and thus bring about purity of mind. After that, the performance of meditation upon the non-difference between the soul and Brahman along with the practice of *śama*, *dama* etc., destroys the impressions of duality, at which stage the mind will be in a state, eligible to take the instruction of the final truth as valid. The process may take even several births. But once the purity of mind is achieved and the seeds of duality are annihilated, the instruction of the non-difference between the soul and Brahman, from a qualified *guru*, through the *mahāvākyā-s*, removes at once, the veil of *avidyā*, thus giving rise to an inner realization of one's true nature as Brahman, which is liberation¹⁰.

Hence it is *jñāna* that is the direct means of liberation. But *karma* also serves as the remote means, and *upāsanā* as the proximate means in achieving this end¹¹. Hence, the *Advaita* view that *jñāna* is the sole means to liberation does not mean

10. *ŚB*, I.i.1, Vol.1 (Part I), p.47.

11. *BSSB*, III.vi. 27

that there is absolutely no scope for *karma* and *upasana*. They are also needed initially, in order to prepare the mind, by purifying it and ridding it completely off the *vāsanā*-s of difference. Still they themselves are not efficacious in removing *avidyā*; and, it is ultimately knowledge that removes it. It is with this view that *jñāna* alone is said to be the direct means of liberation.

In view of the above position, there is no room for the objection that, knowledge is not seen to effectuate liberation in ordinary parlance and that bondage is seen to continue as before, even after the rise of knowledge. As has been pointed out, *jñāna* does not stand here for the mere understanding of the meaning of textual passages but means an inner realization. That is why, unless there occurs the said realization, one cannot be said to have had an understanding of the text also, clarifies Śaṅkara.

*nanu śrutabhr̥ahmano'pi yathāpūrvam samsāritva
-darśanat na rajusvarūpakathanavat arthavatvam
ityuktam. atrocyate na avagatabrahmātma-
bhāvasya yathāpūrvam samsāritvam śakyam
darśayitum vedapramāṇajanita brahmātma-
bhāvavirodhāt¹²*

Hence the continuance of bondage even after the knowledge of non-difference between the soul and Brahman, only means that there has never arisen knowledge at all.

12. *ibid.*, I.i.4.

The above objection can be met in another way also. For one who sees the moon as two moons due to a defect in the eye, the instruction by a reliable person that there is actually only one moon, does produce the knowledge that there is really only one moon. Nevertheless, there still continues the knowledge of two moons due to some defect. So also the continuance of bondage even after the rise of knowledge can be accounted for, on the basis of the continuance of traces of *bhedavāsana-s*, which have not been destroyed completely. Still, they do not have the efficacy to bind the person as the root-cause, namely *avidyā*, has been destroyed, through knowledge. It is thus: a burnt cloth continues to appear in the same folded condition, as it was kept before burning, but yet it cannot be adapted to practical needs of life, afterwards. So also, the *bhedavāsana-s* continue even after the destruction, like a burnt cloth; it is called *badhitānuvṛtti*. But they do not have the potency to bind the soul any more.

5.2.3.2. THE ROLE OF KARMA

According to *Advaita*, performance of *karma-s* plays a significant role in achieving the fruits of liberation. Though knowledge is accepted to be the direct means of liberation, *karma* plays a predominant role as a remote means to knowledge.

An earnest performance of *karma*, without any attachment towards its fruits produces unseen merit, which cleanses one's mind. When the mind is thus purified, there arises a desire to know Brahman, which is known as *vividīṣā*.

The text,

*tametam vedānuvacanena brāhmaṇā
vividīṣanti yajñena...¹³*

states that *karma-s* are needed only for generating the desire to know. The term *vividīṣanti* signifies that study of one's *veda*, etc., serve as the means for generating the desire to know and not for knowledge itself, and much less for the final fruit - liberation.

Once the desire for the knowledge of Brahman has arisen, the aspirant seeks a qualified *guru* who is himself a realized soul, and takes instructions from him in the form that the Upaniṣadic texts convey only the non-difference between the soul and Brahman. This is called *śravāṇa*. The next stage is *manana*. In this stage, the aspirant convinces within himself that the truth of the *Upaniṣad-s* that was instructed to him could not be stultified by counter-arguments.

When there has arisen a firm conviction in the aspirant that there does not exist any difference in reality, he gets freed from the obligation to perform *karma-s* any more. Thus the function of *karma* comes to an end, with bringing about the purity of mind through destroying sins and generating the desire for Brahman -knowledge, after giving rise to the conviction that difference is only illusory.

At this stage *śama*, *dama*, etc., which are of the form of control of senses, become the proximate means for attaining Brahman-realization.

13. *Br. Up.*, VI.iv.22.

The next major impediment for inward realization of Brahman is only the *bhedavāsana*-s which have to be destroyed totally. And this is achieved through *upāsanā*, which is referred to as *nididhyāsana*. A constant practice of mediation of the identity between the soul and Brahman, removes the impressions of difference. Hence *nididhyāsana* should be pursued along with all proximate means - *śama*, *dama*, *uparati*, *titikṣā*, *samādhāna* and *śraddha*, until all the *bhedavāsana*-s are removed. At this stage, when the *mahāvākyā*-s are contemplated, there arises the immediate realization of Brahman-Ātman, which at once annihilates *avidyā*. Thus it is ultimately knowledge (arising from the *mahāvākyā*-s) that serves as the direct means of liberation¹⁴

In sum, according to *Advaita*, knowledge is the exclusive means of liberation. *Karma* and *upāsanā*, however, serve as aids in preparing the ground for the rise of this knowledge.

5.3 RĀMĀNUJA'S VIEW

5.3.1 THE NATURE OF LIBERATION

According to Rāmānuja, liberation consists in the soul getting freed from the influence of *karma*-s, in regaining the qualities that are natural to it - the qualities that remained concealed due to *karma*-s, and its attaining supreme bliss by enjoying the sublime qualities of God and the enchanting beauty of His form.

14. S.B., I.i.1, Vol. I (Part I), pp.46-49.

Bondage, according to Rāmānuja, constitutes the soul undergoing suffering due to its past *karma-s*. Due to its *karma-s* which are in the form of merits and demerits, the soul attains several bodies and thus several names and forms, and this is *samsāra*.

*puṇyāpuṇyanibandhana acitsaṁsargaprayukta
nānārūpabhbhaktvameva hi saṁsārah¹⁵*

Thus *karma-s* give rise to suffering by imprisoning the soul in insentient matter, due to which the true nature of the soul is concealed¹⁶. Hence *mokṣa*, consists in getting released from the shackles of *karma-s*. And removal of *karma-s* coincides with the manifestation of all the divine qualities, which remain concealed due to the power of *karma-s*, while it is in bondge. Once it is liberated, it attains the abode of God - Lord Nārāyaṇa, and sheds even its subtle body and gets purified. Then it shines in its natural radiance with all the divine qualities manifested. At that time, its knowledge, which remained contracted all the time, expands to the maximum and thus the soul becomes literally all-pervasive, through its *dharma-bhūtajñana*.

The soul in its natural state is free from sin (*apahatapāpmā*), old-age (*vijarah*), death (*vimṛtyuh*), grief (*viśokah*), hunger (*vijighatsah*) and thirst (*apipāsaḥ*).

The *Viṣṇudharmottarapurāṇa* states: A gem shines froth in its natural light when the dust covering it is removed; the light is not newly

15. *ibid.*, II.iii.2.

16. *ibid.*, III.ii.5.

created therein. The act of digging of a well does not create water anew, but only brings out what already exists there. In the same way, the qualities such as (unlimited) consciousness, etc., which are innate to the soul, shine forth when the *karma-s* are removed.

*yathā na kriyate jyotṣṇā malaprakṣālanānmaneh
doṣa prahāṇānna jñānam ātmanah kriyate tathā.
yathodapāna karaṇāt kriyate na jalāmbaram
sadeva nīyate vyaktim asataḥ sambhavaḥ kutah
tathā heyagunādhvamsād avabodhādayo guṇāḥ
prakāśyante na janyante nitya evātmano hi te¹⁷*

Thus the soul gets liberated from the influence of *karma-s*, when the latter are removed. Thereby, it regains its original nature. And the expression *svarāṭ* used with reference to a liberated soul becomes significant, as the latter manifests in its pristine nature.

Again the soul, by itself is of a blissful nature and its essence is identical with that of God, the only difference being that it is atomic in size, while that of God, is infinite. It is as pure as that of God¹⁸.

Hence at the state of liberation, the soul enjoys its own self too, but enjoys it only in conjunction with God as *aham brahmāsmi*. It thus enjoys not only the splendour of God but also of its own self, of course with the awareness that it is only a mode of God and never independent from Him¹⁹.

17. Quoted in *ŚB.*, IV.iv.3.

18. *ŚB.*, IV.iv.4.

19. Loc. cit

THE NATURE AND MEANS OF LIBERATION

The soul again, is at liberty to take one or several bodies or not to take any body at all, while enjoying the bliss of liberation. If it takes one, it does so by its mere will. And the bodies are not made of empirical elements, but of extra-empirical ones, that characterize the abode of God (called *Vaikuntha*). Or if it does not take a body of its own, it may choose to take one, provided by God and enjoy the pleasures in that world²⁰.

It may be said that the view that the released soul takes a body is wrong because, to be in bodily existence innately leads to misery, and scriptures declare that, one ceases to be afflicted by pleasure and pain, only when one is dissociated from the body.

*na ha vai saśarīrasya sataḥ priyāpriyayoh
apahatirasti aśarīram vā va santam na
priyāpriye sprśatah*²¹

Rāmānuja, however, clarifies that the cause of misery is not the mere association with a body, but association with a body, that is caused due to *karma*-s. In the case of a liberated soul it takes a single body or several bodies by its own resolve, and hence they are not caused by any *karma*. Further, it has perfect liberty to give them up at will. Hence, the body is not a source of misery. On the other hand, it is only a source of immense pleasure. And the *Upaniṣad* itself declares that the soul takes several bodies at will.

20 ibid., IV iv 12-13

21. Ch Up., VIII xii 1

*sa ekadhā bhavati tridhā bhavati pañcadhā
saptadhā...²²*

Now there may arise the doubt as to how the soul, which is atomic in size, could take several bodies simultaneously. Rāmānuja clarifies that it is through the *dharmabhūtajñāna* that the soul takes several bodies. It is similar to the light of the sun, or of a lamp, pervading places far away from them, and illuminating them. That is, Rāmānuja is of the view that the liberated soul, out of its own will, takes many bodies²³: and its attributive consciousness of *dharmabhūtajñāna* having expanded to the maximum pervades the other bodies too. In the case of the bound soul, however, its *dharmabhūtajñāna* is concealed by *karma*-s, and so it could pervade only its own body, and not other bodies. It has already been observed that the knowledge of the soul becomes infinite at the state of liberation, which is stated by the Śvetāśvatara passage:

*vālāgraśatabhāgasya satadhā kalpitasya ca
bhago jīvah sa vijñeyah sa cānanyāya
kalpate²⁴*

Thus according to Rāmānuja, the liberated soul, in effect, becomes almost similar to God Himself, attaining all His divine qualities such as infinite knowledge and bliss, freedom from *karma*, and the consequent freedom from imperfections. It also remains at the abode of God having resolves and desires that never go unfulfilled. Though the soul

22. ibid., VII.xxvi.2.

23. S.B., IV.iv.15

24. Śvet. Up., V.9

thus becomes God-like in almost all aspects, it never attains the ability of controlling the entire universe, which includes the latter's creation, sustenance and destruction (*jagadvyāpāra*)²⁵.

These features constitute, according to the scriptures, the specific characteristic of God, and this characteristic can never be attained by any finite soul.

From the above it would be clear that God is the Ultimate Master of the Universe which means that even at the state of liberation, the soul remains under His control. Hence liberation, according to Rāmānuja, means only liberation from the influence of *karma* and it does not mean that the soul becomes free from the control of God also. This accordingly to Sudarśana Sūri is the significance of the aphorism.

*ata eva ca ananyādhipatiḥ*²⁶

Here the author of the *sūtra*-s, while referring to the liberated soul, states that the soul is no more subject to the injunctive and prohibitive ordinations of the *śāstra*-s, since it comes to be endowed with a will that never fails (*satyasāṅkalpaḥ*).

And this again is because the soul is no more under the control of *karma*-s which were responsible for the concealment of the divine qualities, such as *satya-sāṅkalpatva* and the like in it.

The soul at the state of liberation is under the control of God alone and not *karma*-s, unlike in

25. B.S., IV.iv.17.

26. ibid., IV.iv.9.

the state of bondage, when it is under the control of *karma* also. This Bādarāyaṇa emphasizes by using the expression, *ananyādhipatiḥ* with reference to the liberated soul. This expression means that the soul has none other than God, as its controller at the state of liberation. He has not used the expression, *anādhipatiḥ*, which would mean, that it has no controller whatsoever. It comes to this that the soul at the state of liberation remains by being controlled by God alone, and not by any other factor, since it is the very nature of the soul to be always under the control of God, as stated by Sudarśana Sūri.

atra anādhipatiriti noktam. kintu
ananyādhipatiḥ iti. atra ayam abhiprāyah:
svabhāvikaśeṣinah paramapuruṣād anyah
nādhipatiḥ muktasyeti. anyathā hi
anādhipatiriti etāvatā'lam²⁷

It must, however, be noted that, to be under the control of God, does not come in the way of the freedom of the soul, which is perfectly maintained.

Thus, the soul, according to Rāmānuja, is so constituted that, it is always under the control of God. This is also evidenced by the passages of the *upaniṣad-s* that declare that God is the controller of the soul:

yasya ātmā śarīram ...yamātmānamantaro
yamayati²⁸
antah praviṣṭaḥ śāsta janānām sarvātmā²⁹,
etc.

27. S.P. on Ś.B., IV.iv.9.

28. Br. Up., V.vii.26

29. Tai. Ār., III.xi.3.

It may be noted here that the passages declare that the soul is under the control of God, irrespective of whether it is in bondage or liberation. Again in the section entitled *jagadvyāpāravarjādhikarana*, it is stated that the liberated soul does not have the authority to carry out the functions of the creation of the world of sentient and insentient beings, and having absolute control over its existence and activity.

And this implies that even the liberated soul is under the control of God. Hence liberation constitutes only liberation from the forces of *karma* and not from the control of God.

There may now arise the following objection: according to Rāmānuja the soul is always under the control of God and is absolutely dependent upon Him, even at the state of liberation. But this view would go against the very concept of liberation. It is because, liberation means freedom from all subjugations. And as this end is not achieved in the state of liberation, the latter will not be sought after by anybody. It has been declared by Manu that dependence involves sorrow while independence, happiness.

Rāmānuja rejects this objection in his *Vedārthasaṅgrahah*, by clarifying the essential natures of the soul and God³⁰. The soul, remains adjectival to God and is always subservient to Him. Divested of this association, the soul has no existence; and such a state is not possible at all. The soul, therefore, cannot be viewed as independent of God, who is its absolute Master,

30. *Vedārthasaṅgrahah*., pp 347-353

to whom it owes everything. And *samsāra* or bondage is a consequence of the soul losing sight of this fact, and thereby becoming a slave to the insentient matter. A non-recognition of the fact that God is the inner self of the soul, results in the slavery towards materialistic ends, which in turn binds the soul, in *samsāra*, due to which arise the consequent sufferings. And to become enlightened, is to realise one's true nature as absolutely dependent (*śesa*) upon God. To know oneself therefore means, to know oneself as an adjectival to God, or as a mode of God.

The object of One's pursuit (*puruṣārtha*) has specific relation to the nature of the soul in bondage. The soul in bondage, always identifies itself with the body in which it abides, and seeks things appropriate to the body with which it is associated. But the fact remains that the soul has lost sight of its true nature of being knowledge, and being subservient to God, and so, it does not seek that which should be sought after, namely, service to God.

By pursuing service to God, the soul derives supreme delight and satisfaction of doing what one should do. Being subordinate to, and a *prakāra* of God, the soul is irresistibly attracted toward God because of His transcendental qualities, and worships Him with a loving devotion.

Service extended to God, unlike the one extended to ordinary beings does not give forth sorrow or grief. On the other hand, God gratified by the loving devotion of the soul grants the latter the divine vision to perceive His true form.

The soul then loses itself in rapturous joy beyond description and feels irresistible urge to serve at His feet which is a fruit in itself (*ananyaprayojana*). The experience of God, unlike mundane pleasures is unlimited and everlasting. It brings at once to the soul immense joy, which is pure and unalloyed. It is of the most intense form and absolute and includes within itself all sorts of other pleasures. To have it, is to get dissolved into divine bliss. As a result the soul gets prompted naturally, to serve at God's feet, which again is a source of immense pleasure, since it is a worthy service (*prāptasevā*).

To sum up: liberation according to Rāmānuja consists in the removal of *karma*, the manifestation of the divine qualities of the soul and the blissful vision of God, which culminates in the soul losing itself in service of God, which is the *summum bonum*.

5.3.2 MEANS OF LIBERATION

According to the *Viśiṣṭādvaita* of Rāmānuja, the final import of the *Upaniṣad*-s is God, who is the final goal of every individual soul. And the means to attain Him is also He Himself. Rāmānuja thus lays great emphasis on the all-important position of God.

Liberation, thus is ultimately to be attained only through the grace of God and not through any human effort, however prodigious it may be. This, however, does not mean that human effort is to be dispensed with altogether. It is required not as a means to liberation, but as a condition

to earn the grace of God. It is in this sense that human efforts like performance of *karma*, meditation, etc., are said to be the means, though in the ultimate analysis, God's grace alone is the means. A basic principle to which all philosophers of the Vedāntic tradition subscribe to, is that, that which is insentient is incapable to do or undo things by itself. It is only a sentient principle that could act or refrain from acting.

The *Mīmāṃsaka*-s consider that fruits of *karma*-s are brought about by an unseen principle called *apūrva*³¹, which acts as an intermediary between the *karma* and its fruits. They thus consider God as a redundant principle. The reason why they hold that it is *apūrva* that brings about the desired fruit and not the *karma*-s themselves directly is that, *karma*-s are momentary and not enduring. And there is a long interval between the actual performance of *karma* at a given point of time and attainment of the fruit of heaven at a distant future. Hence there is required an enduring principle called the *apūrva* which results from the performance of sacrifice.

According to the Vendātins, however, the view of the *Mīmāṃsaka*-s is wrong. The first objection against the view is that there is no proof (*pramāṇa*) in respect of the so-called *apūrva*. In fact its admission involves the defect of dispensing with God, who is declared to be the dispenser of the fruits of action and also the defect of assuming a new principle called *apūrva*, for which no proof can be adduced. The second objection is that even

the assumed *apūrva*, being insentient is not efficacious to give rise to the fruits, by itself. Hence it must be held that it is only God, who grants the fruit³² and not the mere act, nor a non-existent *apūrva*.

Although God grants the fruit of liberation, He does not thrust it upon souls who do not long for it. Liberation could not be attained at the mere fall of the human body nor just by one's wish. It requires a deep yearning and a sincere effort on the part of the soul to attain it.

The nature of liberaton was outlined in the previous section. It consists in the removal of *karma-s* which are in the form of merits and demerits and attaining the divine vision of God. And in order to achieve even the former, human capabilities are too inadequate. And it is in this sense that it is held that God is the ultimate means, since human effort, however, prodigious it may be, is not capable of annihilating *karma-s* whose extent or degree cannot be determined.

Nevertheless, human effort is needed. It is needed not as a means, as observed earlier, not even just to gain divine grace, but to prepare the soul to enjoy the bliss of liberation. Just as a person affected by jaundice cannot enjoy sweet milk, so also a person who does not desire the fruit of liberation cannot enjoy it.

The first step towards liberation is a deep dissatisfaction with worldly fruits. But that should not be one, which arises out of a frustration caused by the inability to attain them, but, should be a

32 ibid., III.ii.37

genuine one, arisen out of a due reflection about the inherent imperfections of the worldly fruits, such as their limitedness, impermanence, involvement of pain at the time of attaining and also at the time of enjoying them, and also of the possibilities of evil effects that may ensue from them.

Men who desire worldly fruits cannot enjoy divine bliss. Indifference to worldly pleasures, which is a precondition to the path of salvation, could be achieved only when one is fully convinced about the existence of a higher pleasure and of the possibility of attaining it. One should also become aware of the defects involved in the ephemeral pleasures, to which the soul has been inclined to, for ages³³.

And it is with this view that Rāmānuja in the first quarter of the third chapter of the *Brahmasūtra-s*, called the *vairāgyapāda*, deals elaborately with the defects of the soul at every state of its existence such as waking, dreaming, deep-sleep, etc., that continue ceaselessly as long as the soul is in bondage. And in the second quarter of the same chapter entitled *ubhayalingpāda*, he dwells upon the sublime qualities of God, in order to generate a desire to attain Him.

Thus love towards God and detachment towards the objects of the world are the essential prerequisites of an aspirant. Liberation, which consists in the experience of God in all His beauty and perfections, demands by its very nature the

33. *S.B.*, III.i.1

soul's longing for it. And this longing should develop int'o an intense form called *bhakti* or *dhyāna* or *nididhyāsana* which are synonymous with meditation or 'constant thinking'. But Rāmānuja adds that it is not just meditation, intellectual in nature, but is one suffused with love. It is called *bhakti* which is defined as 'meditation with love'.

prītipūrvam anudhyānam bhaktirityabhidiyate

And *bhakti* or *dhyāna*, according to Rāmānuja is a form of knowledge. That there is distinction between perceptual knowledge and *dhyāna* may be admitted. But it cannot be said that the former alone is knowledge and not the latter. That is another form of knowledge. Knowledge or *jñāna* is a broad category which is classified into various kinds, such as perception, inference, verbal testimony, memory, meditation, reflection, etc. And one form of knowledge is essentially different from another. Yet the term *jñāna* is equally applicable to all, and just because there is difference between two forms of knowledge, one does not cease to be knowledge. For instance, perception is *vastutantra* and *anumāna* is *puruṣatantra*. That is, when all the conditions for the rise of knowledge are satisfied, there shall arise knowledge which is the characteristic of perception. And it is also true that it cannot be had in a distorted fashion according to the will of a person, and hence is *vastutantra*. In the case of *anumāna*, however, it can be had, or not had, or can be had in different ways in accordance with the will of a person, and hence is *puruṣatantra*. On this ground, *anumāna* cannot be said to be different from *jñāna*. So also

dhyāna or *upāsanā* is a form of *jñāna*. In fact it is this alone which has been enjoined as the means of release in the *Upaniṣad*-s and not *jñāna* in the form of understanding the verbal meaning of the *mahāvākyā*-s, as the *Advaitin* thinks. We shall now examine the *Advaita* view that the knowledge of the import of the *mahāvākyā*-s serves as the only means of liberation.

5.3.3. SENTENCE MEANING DOES NOT CONSTITUE THE MEANS TO LIBERATION

Rāmānuja is of the view that the *Upaniṣad*-s no doubt declare knowledge as the sole means to liberation. But the significance of the *Upaniṣadic* statements must clearly be understood³⁴. A mere understanding of the import of the texts like *tat tvam asi*, is not intended to be the means to liberation, for it is not possible to enjoin knowledge of the import of the texts, as it is attained just by a formal reading of the texts³⁵.

It is admitted by the *Advaitin* that the removal of the indeterminable *avidyā* constitutes liberation. *Avidyā* has for its content, pure consciousness which is only the identity of the true nature of the soul, which is atman, and the true nature of God, which is termed Brahman. In order that *avidyā* may be removed, we required knowledge - a direct one, involving the identity of ātman and Brahman, and such a knowledge could arise only from the *mahāvākyā*-s, and not from anything else.

34. ibid., I.i.1, Vol.1 (part I), p.49

35. ibid., pp.49-50

Hence the Upaniṣadic declaration that *jñāna* is the means implies only such knowledge and not anything else, such as *upāsanā* or *dhyāna*, since the indeterminable *avidyā* could be removed only by knowledge and not by meditation.

The above argument, however, is not in accordance with ordinary experience. If bondage, being a product of *advidyā*, were illusory and if knowledge were to be its removing factor, then it must be held that *avidyā* is removed in the case of those who have attained knowledge. This, however, is not noticed. Hence it must be held that bondage is real.

The *Advaitin* might argue that the non-removal of bondage is not because of the fact that it is not illusory, but because of the fact that knowledge had not arisen at all. This is because, knowledge that leads to liberation is the knowledge of identity which cannot arise until the latent impressions of difference (*bhedavāsanā*-s) are totally annihilated. Hence it is not proper to say that *avidyā* has not been removed even after the rise of knowledge, for being impeded by *bhedavāsanā*-s, knowledge has not dawned to all.

Yet another way of meeting the objection suggested by the *Advaitin* is: knowledge which has arisen, is not efficacious in removing *avidyā*, because knowledge is impeded by traces of *bhedavāsanā*-s. To account for the *bhedavāsanā*-s the continuance of *avidyā* must be admitted. It is just like the continuance of the vision of two moons, due to some optical defect even after the rise of the right knowledge that there is really only one moon.

According to Rāmānuja, neither of the above replies is sustainable. In the first place, it is not possible to maintain that *bhedavāsanā*-s impede the rise of knowledge. It is because, the *vāsanā*-s, by being themselves illusory, are subject to removal by knowledge; and so what are to be removed by knowledge cannot impede the rise of knowledge³⁶.

It cannot also be said that the illusory cognition of duality continues to exist, even after the rise of right knowledge, on the basis of *bhedavāsanā*-s. The analogy of the continuance of the cognition of two moons, even after the rise of the right knowledge that there is only one moon, cannot be cited to substantiate this view. It is because the knowledge that there is only one moon does not involve reference to that factor which causes the cognition of two moons. Moreover the defect is real. Hence in spite of one having the cognition that there is only one moon, the continuance of the cognition of two moons is possible. In the case of the analogue, however, the right knowledge referring to the identity of the true nature of the soul with that of God, which removes *avidyā* should remove the *bhedavāsanā*-s too, which being the products of *avidyā* are illusory. If it is maintained that the *bhedavāsanā*-s exist even after the rise of right knowledge, then there would arise the unwelcome result of the *bhedavāsanā*-s not being removed by any factor whatsoever. Liberation would then be an impossibility.

36. *S.P. on S.B.*, I.i.1, Vol.1 (Part I), p.51

5.3.4. CRITIQUE OF THE CONCEPT OF *JĪVANMUKTI*

From the foregoing discussion, it would have become clear that there cannot be illusion, after the rise of knowledge, nor can knowledge be impeded by an illusion, which itself is removable through knowledge. It is in this context, that Rāmānuja points out that the concept of *jīvanmukti* as admitted by the *Advaitin*, could not be explained satisfactorily.

According to *Advaita*, the physical body, the *karma*-s etc., are all illusory and hence removable by knowledge and no other factor is accepted to bring about their removal. This being the case, when there arises knowledge, all these illusions should at once be removed and there should strictly be no continuance of these. If traces of *karma* remain and if the physical body persists even after the rise of knowledge, then it must be held that they are not removable through knowledge.

To quote Prof. Raghavachar³⁷, "If empirical life persists after enlightenment, that cannot be due to *avidyā*. If it does not persist, there is *mukti* pure and simple and no adjectives or qualifications of it are justified".

Thus it must be noted that Rāmānuja criticises from the standpoint of *Advaita* itself, the concept of *jīvanmukti* as one, which does not fit in with its basic premise.

37. Introduction to *Vedārthasangrahaḥ*., p.100

According to Rāmānuja, it is only *dhyāna* or *upāsanā*, that constitutes the means to liberation. *Jñāna*, pure and simple, cannot be viewed to be so. It was however contended earlier, that there is no intervening factor between the liberating knowledge and release, and *jñāna* is the exclusive means of liberation, implying thereby that *dhyāna* is not the means. Hence it is necessary to discuss whether scriptures advocate *jñāna*, different from *dhyāna* as the means of liberation!

5.3.5. DO UPANIṢAD-S ADVOCATE *JÑĀNA* AS DIFFERENT FROM *DHYĀNA*?

Rāmānuja points out that the *Upaniṣad-s* repeatedly and specifically ordain *dhyāna* or *upāsanā* as the means in texts such as

omityeva ātmanam dhyāyata³⁸

nicayya tam mr̥tyumukhātpramucyate³⁹

*dhyānananirmathābhyaśāt devam paśyet
nīgudhavat⁴⁰*

and the like. It must however, be admitted that the *Upaniṣad-s* do speak of *jñāna* or *vedanā* as the means. But these terms are general in nature, and they refer only to the specific meaning of *dhyāna* and not a mere verbal understanding.

The above will be clear from *Upaniṣad-s* themselves, which use words such as *jñāna*, *vedanā*, etc., interchangeably in the sense of

38. *Muṇḍ.*, *Up.*, II.ii.6.

39. *Kaṭh.*, *Up.*, iii.15

40. *Muṇḍ.*, *Up.*, II.ii.5

upāsanā, *dhyāna*, etc. For instance, the *Chāndogyopaniṣad* commences with the statement, “One should mediate (*upāsīta*) upon mind as Brahman”⁴¹ and concludes by saying “He who knows (*veda*) thus, shines and glows with fame, greatness and spiritual lustre”⁴²

The *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* too, uses the two words *jñāna* and *upāsanā*, interchangeably. In the text, ‘If one meditates (*upāste*) upon empirical things consisting of names and forms, one cannot know (*veda*); one would remain incomplete; (hence) one shall meditate (*upāsīta*) upon the self’⁴³”, the word *upāsanā* and *jñāna* or *vedanā* are exchanged.

Yet another section of the *Chāndogya* commences with the statement “Raikva who knows (*veda*) and Brahman, the object of his knowledge are both explained to you by me”⁴⁴, and ends by saying “Impart me the knowledge of that deity whom you meditate upon (*upāste*)”⁴⁵. It would be evident that in passages like these, the *Upaniṣad*-s use the word *vedanā* synonymously with the terms *upāsanā*. This shows that the general terms like *vedanā*, etc. in the *Upaniṣad*-s must be understood in the special sense of *upāsanā*; and not in the sense of mere understanding of the sentence-meaning.

Rāmānuja further draws attention to usages such as *anuvidya vijānāti*⁴⁶ and *vijñāya prajñām*

41. *Ch. Up.*, III.xviii.1

42. *ibid.*, III.xviii.5

43. *Bṛ. Up.*, III.iv.7

44. *Ch. Up.* IV.i.4

45. *ibid.*, IV.ii.2

46. *ibid.*, VIII.xii.6.

*kurvīta*⁴⁷, which enjoin one to practice knowledge after knowing. It is obvious that, the literal meaning is not intended in these passages. On the other hand, they seek to ordain *dhyāna* or meditation. *Dhyāna* could be pursued only after the initial understanding of the sentence-meaning, which is first referred to by the terms *anuvidya* and *vijñāya*. Subsequent to this, *dhyāna* is ordained and this is evident from the expressions *vijānāti* and *prajñām kurvīta*⁴⁸. Hence these passages confirm again that *dhyāna* alone is intended as the means. And other passages such as *omityevātmanam dhyāyata*⁴⁹, *nicāyya tam mrtyumukhāt pramucyate*⁵⁰, etc., specifically enjoin meditation as the means to liberation.

It is therefore clear that the *Upaniṣad*-s prescribe *dhyāna* or meditation as the means, and not mere knowledge in the form of the understanding of the texts of the *Upaniṣad*-s.

The author of the *Brahmaśūtra*-s too has determined that it is not mere *jñāna* in the form of understanding the import of the texts that leads to liberation, but one in the form of practising the remembrance of God, steadily.

—*Avṛttirasakṛdupadeśāt*⁵¹.

47. *Br. Up.* VI.iv. 21.

48. *S.B.*, I.i.1., Vol.1 (Part I), p.53

49. *Muṇḍ. Up.*, II.ii.6.

50. *Kaṭh. Up.*, I.iii.15.

51. *B.S.*, IV.v.1.

And further he states that it has to be pursued till the soul departs from the body :

*āprayāñāt*⁵²

Thus, according to Rāmānuja, scriptures prescribe only *dhyāna* or *upāsanā*, as the sole means of liberation.

5.3.6 THE ROLE OF KARMA

The said *dhyāna*, again, is aided by the performance of *karma*-s; it is not divested of them. *karma* serves as a subsidiary (*aṅga*) to *dhyāna* or *upāsanā*, and without it, it is impossible to complete the *upāsanā* itself. As declared by the author of the *sūtra*-s, *upāsanā* depends upon all the *karma*-s pertaining to the specific stage and class of life (*varna* and *āśrama*) of the aspirant.

*sarvāpeksā ca yajñādiśruterāśvavat*⁵³

Just like the riding of a horse needs its accessories such as a saddle, rein, etc., *upāsanā* needs all its accessories, for its fruition - the accessories, which are in the form of the specific *karma*-s. Thus, according to Rāmānuja, *karma*-s serve as the means of liberation by being the subsidiaries of *upāsanā*, and hence they are to be pursued necessarily, till the fall of the body. The *upāsanā* too is pursued till the end of one's life.

The *Advaitin*, however, contends that performance of *karma*-s is opposed to the liberating knowledge. It thus cannot be carried on till the

52. ibid., IV.i.6

53. ibid., III.iv.26.

end, but has to be given up once the purity of mind is achieved. And he adduces several reasons to show that *karma* and *jñāna* are opposed to each other. The liberating knowledge is the knowledge of identity, while *karma* by its very nature involves difference. On this ground *karma* and *jñāna* are opposed to each other. Again the fruits of *karma* are declared to be non-eternal while that of *jñāna* is said to be eternal, and this shows that there is direct opposition between the two. Further, several accessories like *sama*, *dama*, etc., which are prescribed for an aspirant, cannot be pursued if *karma*-s were to be performed. It follows that *karma* cannot go together with knowledge. And the scriptures declare knowledge as the means, to the exclusion of everything else. It is hence obvious that *karma* cannot be a means along with *jñāna*. Thus the scope of *karma* is restricted to generating purity of mind after which it has to be abandoned.

The above view of the *Advaitin* is a result of his basic view that the world is only illusory and that knowledge of identity alone leads to liberation. Neither of the two positions, as has been explained earlier, can be satisfactorily explained.

It has further been shown that the scriptures prescribe only *upāsanā* as the means and not *jñāna* in the sense as understood by *Advaitin*. And on this ground, the view that *karma* and *jñāna* are opposed to each other, loses its significance. Since *jñāna* in the form of *upāsanā* is the means advocated, *karma* is not only unopposed to it, but is an auxiliary to it too.

The other arguements of the *Advaitin* are met, on the following lines: It was contended that *jñāna* and *karma* are opposed to each other, as their fruits differ vastly. The fruits of *karma* are declared to be non-eternal, while that of knowledge is eternal. But this arguement, Rāmānuja states, is also not sound. This is because, *karma* produces fruits that are non-eternal, only if one is attached to the fruits and performs them with a desire for the fruit. But the same *karma-s*, when performed with a sense of detachment, that is, as an offering to God, do not produce fruits that are non-eternal, but instead aid the growth of *upāsanā*, by producing purity of mind.

The *Advaitin* does agree in respect of the fact that *karma-s* performed with a sense of detachment produce purity of mind. But he feels that, it should be stopped once that is attained. But according to Rāmānuja, it is not enough if purity of mind is attained once, but it has to be maintained throughout, for which performance of *karma-s* is to be carried on upto the end. Hence if *karma* is abandoned after some time, there is every likelihood of the mind getting polluted again. And to avoid this, one must perform *karma*, with a sense of detachment. Further, it has been determined by the author of the aphorisms that *karma* is an accessory (*aṅga*) for *upāsanā*,⁵⁴ and so it has to be performed as long as *upāsanā* itself (which is the *aṅgi*) is continued.

Thus there is no *pramāṇa* for the abandonment of *karma*. It has rather been mentioned in the scriptures that *karma-s* have never been abandoned

54. ibid., III.iv.33

but have been performed with diligence, by those who were practicing *brahmavidyā* (that is, *upāsanā*).

*iyāja so'pi subahūn yajñān jñānavyapāśrayah
brahmavidyāmadhiṣṭāya tartum mṛtyum avidyayā⁵⁵*

Hence there is no stage in one's life where *karma*-s could be dispensed with.

It was again pointed out that scriptures declare knowledge as the sole means, to the exclusion of everything else including *karma*. But Rāmānuja points out that these texts mean only that *karma*-s by themselves do not become an independent means to liberation and that they do not totally deny any role for *karma*-s. *Karma*-s are needed very much as accessories for the *upāsanā*. According to Rāmānuja, it is only *upāsanā* aided by *karma*-s, which is the means to liberation, and not *upāsanā* unaided by the performance of *karma*-s. Thus the Upaniṣadic declaration that *jñāna* alone is the means to liberation, means only that *karma*-s do not become an independent means, which does not, however, preclude any role for *karma*-s. Further, it has already been proved that the Upaniṣadic declaration that *jñāna* is the means refers only to *jñāna* in its special sense known as *upāsanā*, and not a mere verbal understanding of the *mahāvākyas*.

In regard to the view that the performance of *karma* would impede the pursuit of *śama*, etc. which have been prescribed as accessories to *jñāna*, Rāmānuja states that scriptures ordain *śama*, *dama*,

55. V.P., VI.vi.12

etc., that is control of senses and of mind only in respect of those acts which are prohibited (*pratisiddha*) and those that are neither prescribed nor prohibited (*avihita-apratisiddha*), and not in respect of those that have been specifically ordained to be performed⁵⁶. Further performance of *karma* is not a counteracting factor for the pursuit of *śama*, etc.

It was also contended by the *Advaitin* that *karma* has been declared as a means only for the rise of desire for the knowledge of Brahman and not as a means for knowledge itself or for *mokṣa*. This view in effect means that one takes to the performance of *karma*-s such as sacrifices, etc., only in order to attain a desire for knowledge. But unless there is desire already in knowledge, there could not arise a desire toward its means, namely, performance of *karma* etc. Hence the text *yajñena*, etc., is similar to the expression *asina jighamsati*. This expression does not mean that the sword is the means for attaining the desire to kill; on the other hand, it means that it is the means for killing. In the same way, the text, *yajñena*, etc., means that performance of *karma* is the means for attaining knowledge, and not for attaining the desire for knowledge⁵⁷.

Thus, according to Rāmānuja, knowledge in the form to *upāsanā* or mediation, constitutes the means of liberation. It consists in maintaining the remembrance of God continuously, with loving devotion, in an intense manner. It would then ripen

56. *SB*, I.i.1., Vol.1 (Part I), p.69.

57. *ibid.*, III.iv. 26

to such a level as to lead to the vision that would comprehend God in His full glory and splendour, which would be similar to direct perception. And thereafter the aspirant remains in such a state that he cannot sustain himself without having such a vision of God even for a moment; and even a momentary loss of such a vision would trouble his heart to a great extent. It is declared thus in the *Garudapurāṇa*:

*yanmuhūrtam kṣanam vāpi vāsudevo na
cintyate
sā hānistanmahacchidram sā bhrāntih
sā ca vikriyā⁵⁸*

It is to be noted, however, that the vision of God, is certainly not a fruit of one's own effort but a 'gift' of God. God immensely pleased with the deep devotion of the devotee, grants Him His vision. But He does not do so to those who do not aspire for it.

It is in this context that the Upaniṣadic view⁵⁹ that 'God chooses that soul for liberation' becomes significant. Rāmānuja elucidates the points on the basis of the *Bhagavadgītā*. God chooses, no doubt but it is not a random choice. He chooses only those who are choice-worthy. And the worth in the soul to be chosen is its loving devotion. The Lord makes it clear in the *Bhagavadgītā* that He cannot be attained by the study of *veda*-s, not by willingly undergoing bodily sufferings (*tapas*), not by

58. *Garudapurāṇa*. 222.22.

59. *Kau. Up.*, III.65.

munificence and not even by sacrifices. It is only through pure *bhakti* that one can attain Him, for He is of such nature⁶⁰. He further declares that He grants the *buddhiyoga*, that is, His divine vision, with utmost compassion to those who long for His company at all times⁶¹.

Rāmānuja concludes that from such passages it is clear that God chooses those who are immensely devoted to Him and who submit themselves with unflinching devotion towards Him.

5.3.7. IS LIBERATION POSSIBLE HERE?

It may now be objected as follows: there are passages such as

*atra brahma samaśnute*⁶²

*tamevam vidvān amṛta iha bhavati*⁶³

which declare that liberation is attained here and now. But the view of Rāmānuja is that liberation is something attained in an other world and not here⁶⁴. Thus his view runs into direct conflict with the passages, cited above. But, according to Rāmānuja there is no conflict at all, when viewed in the light of the discussion of all these passages by Badarāyana in the *Aśrtyupakramādhikarana*⁶⁵.

As observed earlier, liberation consists in the removal of *avidyā*, that is *karma*, and having the

60. *B.G.*, XI.53.

61. *ibid.*, X.10.

62. *Kath. Up.*, II.iii.14.

63. *Tai. Ār.*, III. xii.17.

64. *infra*. p.205

65. *B.S.*, IV.ii.5.

direct vision of God, that brings forth with it supreme bliss⁶⁶. Hence liberation, while one is alive, must be understood in the sense that the soul is liberated from the shackles of *karma*. It is thus: as the aspirant proceeds in the path of liberation and practices intense meditation with unflinching devotion, it ripens to such a level that he gets a vision of God, which is almost similar to perception. And this constitutes a stage in the process of meditation. When there arises, such a vision, all the *sañcita karma*-s, or the accumulated merits and demerits, of the *upāsaka*, which have not yet started yielding forth their fruits are destroyed; and, the merits or demerits, which the aspirant may acquire unintentionally after attaining such a vision, do not cling to him⁶⁷. But the aspirant has to exhaust the *prārabdha karma*-s, or the merits and demerits which have started yielding forth their result in the form of the present body, only by experiencing their fruits in one or more births

As has been pointed out earlier; liberation constitutes the removal of *karma*-s and experiencing bliss ensuing out of the vision of God. Now even while the *upāsaka* continues the practice of the *upāsanā*, he attains both these fruits, though only partially. And this state, where there is the removal of *karma* and the experience of God, is almost similar to this state of *mokṣa* or liberation. And it is this state, that is referred to in passages such

66. *infra.*, p. 213

67. *S.B.*, IV.i.13.

as *atra brahma samaśnute* and the like⁶⁸, cited above. The final emancipation, however, occurs only after the fall of the body, and after attaining the abode of God, called *Vaikunṭha*.

Nevertheless, the reason why some passages speak of liberation here itself is because, the vision of God that the aspirant attains here is something unique, which is granted by God, who is immensely pleased by the loving devotion of the aspirant. Once that is attained there is nothing that needs to be attained, for that itself brings along with it, transcendental bliss which can be termed almost *mokṣa*, itself. And this is the reason why some passages, apparently, refer to this itself as *mokṣa*, though it is not the final release.

And the author of the aphorisms too, refers to such a state of liberation, as one which is attained before the fall of the physical body - *amṛtatvam ca anuposyā*⁶⁹.

Thus *mokṣa*, in its final form, is one which will be attained only at the abode of God. This is also confirmed by other passages which speak about the path, which is called the *devayāna* or the *arcirādimārga*, through which the soul travels and attains final release. The travel through this path never again brings the soul back to this mundane existence⁷⁰.

The very fact that the *Upaniṣad*-s and the author of the *sūtra*-s describe the path through

68. *ibid.*, IV.ii.12.

69. *B.S.*, IV.ii.12.

70. *ibid.*, IV.ii.22.

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which the soul reaches the world of God, proves that liberation is to be attained in a hereafter and not here.

To sum up: liberation consists in attaining the world of God. The sole means of liberation is *jñāna* or *upāsanā*, which is mediation upon God with loving devotion, aided by the performance of duties relating to one's stage and class of life. The soul, with a view to attain liberation, pursues meditation upon God in an intense manner, and at this stage it attains the vision of God, which is more or less similar to direct cognition, experiences the bliss that ensues from it and becomes free from the shackles of *karma*. And this stage is almost similar to liberation. Liberation, in the strict sense of the term, is attained only after the final fall of the body, and after reaching the world of God.

EPILOGUE

Having dealt with in detail the views of the *Advaita* school and that of Rāmānuja, a few remarks, by way of an epilogue may not be out of place.

To begin with it has to be stated that both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja were essentially traditionalists and both offer themselves only as the spokesmen of their respective traditions and do not claim to be the originators of their system. And it also could be justly vouched that both their schools had their roots in the basic Vedantic texts.

But this apart, a critical study of the *bhāṣya*-s of both the *ācārya*-s shows that they had their own unique conceptions of Reality. Though scriptures were held to be the ultimate authorities by both, though they adopted similar approaches towards them, still if they arrived at entirely different results claiming the same scriptures as their source texts, it was due to the uniqueness of their basic conceptions. We can say that these were almost axiomatic in the development of their philosophies. Throughout their *bhāṣya*-s, we can see that these axioms run as undercurrents and play a major role in the formulation of their philosophies. An in-depth study shows that their notions varied, their conceptions differed and their values conflicted.

Śaṅkara was anxious to see that Reality, which is Brahman, transcends all our commonplace notions, ideas and imaginations. It is a perfection beyond our comprehension. And such a Reality, he thought, should necessarily be one, where none of our worldly conceptions found their way in. That is why, it does not look odd to him to conceive of Brahman beyond any properties whatsoever, though, he seeks to establish such a quality-less Brahman entirely on the basis of the *Upaniṣad*-s in spite of their clear description of Brahman as repository of all virtues, at numerous places.

A basic guiding principle, according to Śaṅkara is that scriptures are meant to teach what could not be known through any other source of knowledge. That is why, when scriptures declare Brahman as endowed with countless excellences and also as devoid of any quality, for Śaṅkara the latter set of passages become more powerful than the former. They teach something which could not be known through any other *pramāṇa*, and this bestows upon them a special claim to be ‘more powerful’. The other set of passages, though belonging to the same *pramāṇa*, namely, the scripture, are to be understood a ‘concession to the ordinary human beings’ who could not elevate themselves to the level of thinking of a *nirguna brahman*.

The scriptures, according to Śaṅkara, emphasize in the ultimate analysis, that Reality is a unitary principle, negating all sorts of differences in it. Hence, even if difference is spoken of by them, that is meant only to be discarded, in the ultimate

analysis, for oneness and difference cannot go together.

Rāmānuja, on the other hand, adopts a synthetic approach. He expressly sets it as his aim to integrate all sorts of apparently contradictory texts, resolving the contradictions, without at the same time divesting any passage of its primary connotation or resorting to secondary signification.

The individual soul, in his system, does not get dissolved in the sea of Brahman, losing its own identity in the process, but retains its individuality and finds fulfilment and enrichment in the company of God.

Rāmānuja does not offer a philosophy in which objects of the world, which are validly known through perception, are rendered to be an 'apparent divergence' of Brahman and which shall cease to exist with the final awakening, a philosophy which fails to carry conviction.

He does not bifurcate Reality into the Brahman of philosophy and God of Religion. Reality is one, and according to him, the Absolute of philosophy cannot be different from God of religion.

He lays great emphasis on *bhakti* as the means to liberation and following the author of *Brahmasūtra*-s, he demonstrates with great acumen that it is only a form of knowledge. The view is not totally unknown to Śaṅkara as is evidenced by his interpretation of the first *sūtra* of the fourth chapter of the *Brahmasūtra*-s; but he is forced to maintain a difference between the two because of his basic philosophic position.

Again, Rāmānuja too, does subscribe to the principle that scriptures are meant to teach something not knowable from any other *pramāṇa*. But on that score he is not prepared to accept that scripture could invalidate other *pramāṇa*-s or that within the scripture itself one set of passages could reign over other supposedly less powerful passages. He accepts that scriptures would not teach about a cow as a cow, which is known through perception. But they will not teach it to be a stone either. In other words, scriptures do not teach about something which could be known through other *pramāṇa*-s nor do they contradict what is validly known through other *pramāṇa*-s. On the other hand, they teach something new, over and above what is already known through other *pramāṇa*-s; as for instance, that Brahman is the indwelling spirit (*antrayāmin*) of both the cow and the stone.

Rāmānuja, again, does not compromise with the Advaita contemplated in the scriptures. But on that count he does not do away with difference altogether, for that also is taught by the scriptures. Difference, according to him, need not be abandoned in order to uphold unity, but instead could be included or subsumed in it. Difference need not scare us as opposed to identity. If it is said that a flower is one as well as many, then it is contradictory. If, on the other hand, it is said, 'it is a single flower with many petals', then there is no contradiction. Thus, according to Rāmānuja, singularity, by itself is not opposed to manifoldness and his elucidation of the philosophy of *Viśiṣṭādvaita* is an ample demonstration of this idea.

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॥ अनुबन्धः ॥
॥ प्रमाणानुक्रमणिका ॥

पु.१७ तत्र नानारूपाणां वाक्यानामविरोधो मुख्यार्थपरित्यागश्च
यथा सम्भवति तथैव वर्णनीयं वर्णितञ्च।

(वेदार्थसङ्ग्रह पृ. ६७५)

पु.२३ न स्थानातोऽपि परस्योभयलिङ्गं सर्वत्र हि।

(ब्र.सू. २.३.११)

पु.२३ न होकं वस्तु स्वत एव रूपादिविशेषोपेतं तद्विपरीतं
चेत्यवधारायितुं शक्यं, विरोधात् ।

(ब्र.सू.गा.भा ३.२.५)

पु.२३ सदेव सोऽप्येदमग्र आसीदेकमेवाद्वितीयम् ।

(ला. ६.२.१)

पु.२४ नेह नानास्ति किञ्चन ; मृत्योस्स मृत्युमाप्नोति
य इह नानेव पश्यति ।

(बृ. ६.४.१५)

पु.२४ यत्र हि द्वैतमिव भवति तदितर इतरं पश्यति; यत्र
त्वस्य सर्वमात्मैवाभूत् तत्केन कं पश्येत् तत्केन
कं विजानीयात् ।

(बृ. ४.४.१४)

पु.२४ ज्ञानस्वरूपमत्यन्तनिर्मलं परमार्थतः ।
तमेवार्थस्वरूपेण ब्रान्तिदर्शनतः स्थितम्॥(वि.पु.१.२.६)

परमार्थस्त्वमेवैको नान्योऽस्ति जगतः पते (वि.पु.१.४.३८)

तस्यात्मपरदेहेषु सतोऽप्येकमयं हि यत्।

विज्ञानं परमार्थो हि द्वैतिनोऽतथ्यदर्शिनः॥(वि.पु.२.१४.३१)

- पु.२६ गोदं स च त्वं स च मर्यमतत
आत्मस्वरूपं त्यज भेदमोहम् । (११५ - ११६)
- पु.२७ क्षेत्रज्ञं चापि मां विद्धि सर्वक्षेत्रेषु भारत (गी. ११)
- पु.२८ निष्कलं निष्क्रियं शान्तं निरवद्वं निरञ्जनम्
(इवे ६५८)
- पु.२९ सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म । (ते आ ११)
- पु.३० अनृतेन हि प्रत्यूढाः । (ला. ८.३)
- पु.३१ मायां तु प्रकृतिं विद्यान्मायिनं तु महेश्वरम्। (इवे ४.१०)
- पु.३२ इन्द्रो मायाभिः पुरुखप ईयते । (बृ. ४.५.१०)
- पु.३३ अनादिमायया सुसो यदा जीवः प्रबुध्यते। (मा. का २.२५)
- पु.३४ अज्ञानेनावृतं ज्ञानं तेन मुख्यान्ति जन्तवः। (म. गी. ५.१५)
- पु.३५ न पुनर्मृत्यवे तदेकं पश्यति
न पश्यो मृत्युं पश्यति । (ला. ७.२६.२)
- पु.३६ यदा ह्यैवैष एतस्मन्बद्धयेऽनात्म्येऽनिरुक्तेऽनिलयने
अभयं प्रतिष्ठां विन्दते अथ सोऽभयङ्गतो भवति। (तै. आ. ७.२)
- पु.३७ ब्रह्म वेद ब्रह्मैव भवति । (मु. ३.२.९)
- पु.३८ तमेव विदित्वाऽतिमृत्युमेति
नान्यः पन्थाः अयनाय विद्यते । (इवे. ३.८)
- पु.३९ पौर्वपर्ये पूर्वदौर्बल्यं प्रकृतिवत्। (ज.स. ६.५.५४)
- पु.४० यद्युद्गाताऽपच्छ्येत, अदक्षिणः स यज्ञः संस्थाप्य
तेन पुनर्यजेत; अथ प्रतिहर्ता, सर्ववेदसं दद्यात्।

१८८ यानुभूतिरजामया, नन्तानन्दविग्रहा ।

महदादिजगन्माया छित्रामिति नमामि ताम् ॥

(१९१५-१६ प्रश्नकल्पना १)

पु.४७ यन्मानाभूतं तदनुत्पन्नं न दृष्टम् ; अपि तूतपत्तिमदेव
दृष्टम्। (श्र.प्र. प्रस(प्र.भा)पु. ११८)

पु.४८ न च स्वतरिसङ्खस्य प्रागभावादयः स्वतोऽन्यतो
वा सिद्ध्यन्ति ; अतोऽस्या नान्येऽपि भावविकाराः ;
जन्मादित्वात्तेषाम्। चेत्यानां च न चिदधर्मत्वं
रूपादिवत्; अतोऽमेया। नास्या मेयो धर्मोऽप्यस्ती-
त्वर्थः; अतोऽनन्ता। अन्तस्यापि मेयत्वेऽतद्वर्मत्वात्।
अमेयत्वेऽपि अनन्यत्वात् तद्रत्ता चितः। कालतः
तावदानन्त्यं सिद्धं, जन्माभावात्। अत एव देशतो
वस्तुतोऽपि। अन्यथा घटादिवत् जन्मप्रसङ्गात्।
न ह्यजं विभाग्यमस्ति... जन्माभावे नान्येऽपि भावविकाराः
स्युः। अतः कूटस्थं सदैकरूपं वस्तु स्वतः सि-
मिति । (इष्टसिद्धिः पु. १)

पु.४९ अहमिति तावत्प्रथमोऽध्यासः । (पञ्चपादिका.पु. ३१)

पु.५६ आनन्दो विषयानुभावो नित्यत्वामिति सन्ति धर्मः
अपृथक्त्वेऽपि चैतन्यात्पृथगिवावभासन्ते। (पञ्चपादिका.पु.)

पु.५१ निर्विकल्पकमेकजातीयद्रव्येषु प्रथमपिण्डग्रहणम् ।
(श्र.प्र.प्र.सं(प्र.भा)पु. ११८)

पु.५१ द्वितीयादिपिण्डग्रहणं सविकल्पकमित्युच्यते ।
(श्र.प्र.- प्र.सं(प्र.भा)पु. ११८)

- पु.५२ वरन्तुगतस्वभावविशेषैः तदेव वरस्तु निर्विशंषमिति
वदन जननी वन्ध्यात्वं प्रतिज्ञायामिव स्ववाग्विरोधमपि
न जानाति । (श्री भा १.१.१ पु.११३)
- पु.५३ संस्थानातिरेणोऽनेकेषु एकाकारबुधिद्वोध्यत्वादर्शनात्।
(श्री. भा.१.१.१.प्र.सं(प्र.भा)पु.१२६)
- पु.५४ अतिरेकवादेऽपि संस्थानस्य सम्प्रतिपन्नत्वाच्च
संस्थानमेव जातिः । (श्री भा १.१.१ प्र.सं(प्र.भा)पु.१२६)
- पु.५५ संस्थानं नाम स्वासाधारणं रूपमिति याथावस्तु
संस्थानमनुसन्धेयम्। (श्री.भा.१.१.१.प्र.सं(प्र.भा)पु.१२६-१२७)
- पु.५६ प्रतियोगिस्मरणकृतविलम्बे सत्यपि ज्ञनस्य
यावत्कार्यसिद्धिं स्थिरत्वं कल्प्यम् ; तथापि प्रतियोगि
निरपेक्षजात्यादेर्भेदत्वेन एकक्षणवर्तित्वेऽपि प्रत्यक्षस्य,
भेदस्य सुग्रहत्वाद्वूरोत्सारितमिति भावः। (श्री.प्र.प्र.सं(प्र.भा)पु.१२३)
- पु.५७ यतु ज्ञानस्य स्वयं प्रकाशत्वमुक्तं तद्विषयप्रकाशनवेलायां
ज्ञातुरात्मनस्तथैव ; न तु सर्वेषां सर्वदा तथैवेति
नियमोऽस्ति । (श्री.भा.१.१.१.प्र.सं(प्र.भा)पु.१३४)
- पु.५८ अनुभूतित्वं नाम वर्तमानदशायां स्वसत्तयैव स्वाश्रयं
प्रति प्रकाशमानत्वं स्वसत्तयैव स्वविषयसाधानत्वं
वा । (श्री.भा.१.१.१.प्र.सं(प्र.भा)पु.१३४)
- पु.५९ अविद्याया आत्मनःपरमार्थतो विभागाभावे सति
वस्तुतो ह्यविद्यैव स्यादात्मा। (श्री.भा.१.१.१.प्र.सं(प्र.भा)पु.१४२)
- पु.६० निरस्ताखिलदुःखोहमनन्तानन्दभाक् स्वराट् ।
भवेयमिति मौक्षार्थी श्रवणादौ प्रवर्तते ॥

अहमर्थविनाशश्वेन्मोक्षइत्यध्यवस्थ्यति
अपसर्पेदसौमोक्षकथाप्रस्तावगन्धतः॥

(श्री.भा.६.६.६ प्र.स(प्र.भा)पु.१४८)

पु.६८ प्रत्यक्षत्वादेव कस्यचिदेव भवेत् दीपादि प्रकाशवत्।
संविदनुभूतिज्ञानादिशब्दाः सम्बन्धशब्दाइति हि
शब्दार्थविदः। नहि लोकवेदयो र्जनात्यादेरकर्मकस्या-
कर्तृकस्य च प्रयोगो दृष्टचरः। (श्री.भा.१.१.१.प्र.स(प्र.भा)पु.१२५)

पु.७० यथा देहादिर्दश्यत्व-पराक्त्वदिहेतुभिः तत्प्रत्यनीक-
द्रष्टृत्व-प्रत्यक्त्वादेर्विविच्यते, एवमन्तःकरण-
रूपाहङ्कारोऽपि तद्व्यत्वादेव तैरेव हेतुभिस्तस्मा-
द्विविच्यते इति। (श्री.भा.प्र.स(प्र.भा)पु.१२५)

तादृशविक्रियात्मकत्वं प्रामाणिकत्वादिष्टमित्यर्थः ;
अचेतनवत्परिणामो ह्यनभ्युपगतः। (श्रु.प्र.प्र.सं(प्र.भा)पु.१६०)

पु.७२ अथाग्निसम्पर्कदियःपिण्डौष्ण्यवत् चित्सम्प्रकर्त्
ज्ञातृत्वोपलाब्धिरिति । नैतत्। संविदि वास्तव
ज्ञातृत्वानभ्युपगमादेव न तत्सम्पर्कदिहङ्कारे ज्ञातृत्वं
तदुपलाब्धिर्वा । (श्री.भा.१.१.१.प्र.सं(प्र.भा)पु.१६१)

पु.७३ तमोगुणाभिभवात् परागर्थनुभवाभावाच्चाहमर्थस्य
विविक्तस्फुटप्रतिभासाभावेऽपि आप्रबोधात्
अहमित्येकाकारेणात्मनः स्फुरणात् सुषुप्तावपि
नाहमभावविगमः। (श्री.भा.१.१.१.प्र.सं(प्र.भा)पु.१६६)

- पु.७६ आत्मने स्वयमवभासमानः अहमित्येवावभासत
 इति स्वापाद्यवरस्थास्वप्यात्मा प्रकाशमानोऽहमित्येवावभासत
 इति सिद्धम्। (श्री.भा.१.१.१.प्र.सं(प्र.भा)पु.१६९.)
- पु.७६ यतु मोक्षदशायामहमर्थो नानुवर्तत इति तदपेशलम्। तथा
 सत्यात्मनाश एवापर्वगः प्रकारान्तरेण प्रतिज्ञातः स्यात्।
 नचाहमर्थो धर्ममात्रं, येन तद्विगमेऽप्यविद्यानिवृत्ताविव
 स्वरूपमवतिष्ठेत; प्रत्युत स्वरूपमेवाहमर्थआत्मनः।
(श्री.भा.१.१.१.प्र.सं(प्र.भा)पु.१७०)
- पु.७७ तद्वैतत्पश्यन् ऋषिवर्मिदेवः प्रतिपेदेऽहंमनुरभवं
 सूर्यश्च। (बृ.४.१०)
- पु.७७ हन्ताहमिमास्तिस्त्रो देवताः।
 बहु स्यां प्रजायेय। (छा.६.३.२)
 स ईक्षत लोकान्नु सृजा इति। (ऐ.३.१)
- पु.७७ यस्मात्क्षरमतीतोहमक्षरादपि चोत्तमः।
 अतोऽस्मि लोके वेदे च प्रथितः पुरुषोत्तमः॥(भ.गी.१५.१८)
 अहमात्मा गुडाकेश। (भ.गी.१०.२०)
 अहं कृत्स्नस्य जगतः प्रभवः प्रलयस्तथा॥(भ.गी.७.६)
- पु.७८ अतः प्रत्यक्षसिद्धत्वादुक्तन्यायागमान्वयात्।
 अविद्यायोगतश्चात्मा ज्ञाताहमिति भासते॥(आत्मसिद्धः १५)
- पु.८१ मत्तः सर्वमहं सर्वं मयि सर्वं सनातने॥(वि.पु. १.१९.८५)
- पु.८२ सर्वगत्वादनन्तस्य स एवाहमवास्थितः।(वि.पु. १.९.८५.)

पु.८२ अन्यश्च राजन् स परः अन्यश्च पञ्चविंशकः।
तत्स्थत्वादनुपश्यन्ति ह्येक एवेति साधवः।

(महाभागतम् मोक्षधर्म ३१६ ३३)

पु.८५ तदात्मानं स्वयमकुरुत । (तै.आ ७१)

पु.८५ प्रकृतिश्च प्रतिज्ञादृष्टान्तानुपरोधात्। (ब्र.सू.१.४ २३)

पु.८६ यच्चकिञ्चिज्जगत्यस्मिन् दृश्यते श्रूयतेऽपि वा ।
अन्तर्बहिश्च तत्सर्वं व्याप्य नारायणः स्थितः॥

(तै.ना. ११ १५)

पु.८७ तदभिध्यानादेव तु तल्लिङ्गात् सः। (ब्र.सू. २.३.१४)
अभिध्योपदेशाच्च। (ब्र.सू.१.४.२४)

पु.८७ तत्तेज ऐक्षत बहु स्यां प्रजायेयेति। (छा. ६.२.३)

पु.८७ ता आप ऐक्षन्त बहव्यः स्याम प्रजायेमहीति ।

(छा. ६.२.४)

पु.८८ यः पृथिव्यां तिष्ठन्.....योऽप्सु तिष्ठन्....यस्तेजसि
तिष्ठन्.... यो वायौ तिष्ठन्....य अक्षाशो तिष्ठन्...
(बृ. ७.७.७)

पु.८८ सदेव सोम्येदमःग्र आसीदेकभेवाद्वितीयम् ;
तदैक्षत बहु स्यां प्रजायेयेति ; तत्तेजोऽसृजत (छा.६.२.१)

पु.८८ चराचरव्यपाश्रयस्तु स्यात्तदव्यपदेशोभावतः
तद्वावभाविवात्। (ब्र.सू. २.३.१७)

पु.९१ तदैक्षत बहु स्यां प्रजायेयेति। (छा. ६.२.३)

पु.९० तदात्मानं स्वयमकुरुत। (तै.आ. ७.१)

- पु.९० तत्सृष्ट्वा तदेवानुप्राविशत् तदनुप्रविश्य
सच्च त्यच्चाभवात्। (न.आ ६.२३)
- पु.९१ मायोपाधिरस्वशक्तिव्यतिकरितपरब्रह्ममूलः प्रपञ्चः
येषां तेऽप्यद्वितीयश्रुतिमवितथयन्त्यत्र तत्तद्विशिष्टे ।
अप्राधान्यात्तथा नः प्रकृति पुरुषयोरन्तरात्मप्रधाने
वाक्येऽस्मिन्स्थूलसूक्ष्मान्वय इति जगतोऽनन्यभावोपपत्तिः ॥
- (अ. सा १६६)
- पु.९४ तद्वेदं तर्ह्यव्याकृतभासीत्तन्नामरूपाभ्यां व्याक्रियत।
- (बृ.३.४.७)
- पु.९५ भाव्यवस्थाविशेषवतः प्रागवस्थायोगो ह्युपादानत्वम्
- (श्रु.प्र.१.१.१.प्र.सं.(प्र.भा)पु.१८५)
- पु.९७ भिन्नप्रवृत्तिनिमित्तानां शब्दानामेकस्मिन्नर्थे वृत्तिः
समानाधिकरण्यम्। (श्री. भा१.१.१.प्र.सं.(प्र.भा)पु.१०१)
- पु.९९ पराऽस्यशक्तिर्विविधैव श्रूयते
स्वभाविकी ज्ञानबलक्रिया च। (श्व. ६.८)
- पु.१०० अपहतपाप्मा विजरो विमृत्युः....सत्यकामः सत्यसङ्कल्पः।
- (छा.८.१.५.)
- पु.१०२ नेह नानास्ति किञ्चन ; मृत्योः स मृत्युमाप्नोति
य इह नानेव पश्यति। (बृ.६.४.१९)
यत्र हि द्वैतमिवभवति तदितर इतरं पश्यति
यत्र त्वस्य सर्वमात्मैवाभूत् तत्केन कं पश्येत। (बृ.६.५.१५)
- पु.१०४ पराऽस्य शक्तिर्विविधैव श्रूयते स्वाभाविकी। (श्व.६.८)

पु.१०४ विज्ञानधन एव एतम्यो भूतेभ्यः समुत्थाय तान्येवानु
विनश्यति।

(बृ. ४८५२)

पु.१०५ न जायते म्रियते वा विपर्श्चित्।

(कठ २१८)

पु.१०५ वायुश्चान्तरिक्षच्चैतदमृतम्।

(बृ. ४३३)

पु.१०५ आत्मन आकाशः सम्भूतः।

(तै.आ.२)

पु.१०६ मृत्योः स मृत्युमाप्नोति य इह नानेव पश्यति।

(बृ.६.४.९)

पु.१०६ पृथगात्मानं प्रेरितारच्च मत्वा जुष्टस्ततस्तेमामृतत्वमेति।

(श्ल.१.६)

पु.१०६ जुष्टं यदा पश्यत्यन्यमीशमस्य महिमानमिति
वीतशोकः।

(मु.३१.१)

पु.१०७ अथ योऽन्यां देवतामुपास्तेऽन्योऽसावन्योऽहमस्मीति
न स वेद आत्मेत्येवोपासीत।

(बृ. ३४६०)

पु.१०८ क्षरं प्रधानममृताक्षरं हरः

क्षरात्मानावीशते देव एकः ॥

(श्ल.१.१०)

ज्ञाज्ञौ द्वावजावीशते देव एकः।

(श्ल.१.९)

पु.१०९ कृत्स्नस्य जगतो ब्रह्मकार्यतया तदन्तर्यामिकतया
च तदात्मकत्वैनैक्यात्तत्प्रत्यनीकनानात्वं प्रतिषिध्यते ।
न पुनः बहु स्यां प्रजायेयेति बहुभवन सङ्कल्पपूर्वकं
ब्रह्मणो नानात्वं श्रुतिस्पृष्ठं प्रतिषिध्यत इति ।

(श्री.भा.१.१.१.प्र.सं.(प्र.भा)पु.२०४-२०६)

पु.११२ पुरुषविमोक्षनिमित्तं तथा प्रवृत्तिःप्रधानस्य ।

(सा.का.५१)

पु.११३ तस्माच्च बध्यतेऽद्वा न मुच्यते नापि संसरति
कश्चित्। संसरति बध्यते मुच्यते च नानाश्रया
प्रकृतिः॥

(सा. का.५२)

- पु.११५ नाह खल्वयमेवं सम्प्रत्यात्मानं जानाति
नो एवेमानि भूतानि। (छा. ८.६६.१२)
- पु.११६ विज्ञातारमरे केन विजानीयात्। (बृ.६.५.१५)
- एष हि द्रष्टा श्रोता....विज्ञानात्मा पुरुषः। (प्र. ४.९)
- पु.११७ एतेभ्यो भूतेभ्यः समुत्थाय तान्येवानुविनश्यति। (बृ.४.४.१२)
- पु.११७ न पश्यो मृत्युं पश्यति न रोगं नोत दुःखताम्।
सर्वं ह पश्यः पश्यति सर्वमाप्नोति सर्वशः॥ (छा. ७.२६.२)
- पु.११९ सदेव सोम्येदंमग्र आसीत्। (छा. ६.२.१)
- आत्मैवेदं सर्वम्। (छा. ७.२.१)
- ब्रह्मैवेदं सर्वम्। (नू.ता.७.३)
- इदं सर्वं यदयमात्मा। (बृ.६.५.५)
- नान्योऽतोऽस्ति द्रष्टा। (बृ.५.३.२७)
- नान्योऽतोऽस्ति द्रष्टृ। (बृ.५.८.१०)
- पु.१२० अन्योऽसावन्योऽहमस्मीति न स वेद यथा पुणा। (बृ.३.४.१०)
- मृत्योः स मृत्युमाप्नोति य इह नानेव पश्यति। (बृ.४.४.१९)
- पु.१२१ यथा सुदीपात् पावकात् विस्फुलिङ्गाः
सहस्रशः प्रभवन्ते सरूपाः।
- तथाऽक्षराद्विविधाः सोम्य भावाः
प्रजायन्ते तत्र चैवापियन्ति ॥ (मु. २.१.१)
- पु.१२१ स वा एष महानज आत्माऽजरोऽमरोऽमृतोऽभयो
ब्रह्म । (बृ. ६.४.२४)

पु.१२१ न जायते म्रियते वा विपश्चित्। (कठ २.३८)

पु.१२६ अंशो नानाव्यपदेशादन्यथा चापि दाशकितवादित्वम्
अधीयत एके । (ब्र.सू.२.३.४२)

पु.१२६ पादोऽस्य विश्वाभूतानि त्रिपादस्यामृतं दिवि।
(तै.आ पु.सू.३.१२.३)

ममैवांशो जीवलोके जीवभूतः सनातनः। (भ.गी.६.७)

पु.११७ एवं जीवपरयो विशेषणविशेष्यत्वकृतं स्वभाववैलक्षण्यम्
आश्रित्य भेदनिर्देशाः प्रवर्तन्ते; अभेदनिर्देशास्तु
पृथक्सिद्धचनहीविशेषणानां विशेष्यपर्यन्तत्वमाश्रित्य
मुख्यत्वेनोपपद्यन्ते। (श्री.भा.२.३.४५)

पु.११८ एषोऽणुरात्मा चेतसा वेदितव्यः। (मु.३.१.९)

पु.११८ वालाग्रशतभागस्य शतधा कर्लिपतस्य च
भागो जीवः स विज्ञेयः। (ष्ठ.५.९)

पु.१३१ प्रकृतेः क्रियमाणानि गुणैः कर्मणि सर्वशः।
अहङ्कार विमूढात्मा कर्त्ताहिमिति मन्यते॥ (भ.गी.३.२७)

पु.१३१ कर्यकरणकर्तृत्वे हेतुःप्रकृतिरुच्यते । (भ.गी.१३.२०)

पु.१३१ अधिष्ठानं तथा कर्ता। (भ.गी.१८.१)

पु.१३२ य आत्मनि तिष्ठन्....य आत्मानमन्तरो यमयति
(वृ.५.७.२६)

पु.१३४ विमृश्यैतदशेषेण यथेच्छसि तथा कुरु (भ.गी.१८.६३)

पु.१३५ अनुमतिः फलदानमुभयमपि दण्डप्रकार एव (शु.प्र.२.२.१)

- पु.१३५ दया हि नाम स्वार्थनिरपेक्षा परदुःखासहिष्णुता ।
 सा च स्वशासनातिवृत्तिव्यवसायिन्यपि वर्तमाना
 न गुणायावकल्पते । प्रत्युतापुंस्त्वमेवावहति ।
 तन्निग्रह एव तत्र गुणः । (श्री.भा.२.२.१)
- पु.१३६ स्वशासनातिवृत्ति-व्यवसाय-निवृत्तिमात्रेणानाद्यनन्त-
 कल्पोपचित्-दुर्विषहानन्तापराधानङ्गीकरेण निरतिशय-
 सुखसंवृद्धये स्वयमेव प्रयतते । (श्री.भा.२.२.१)
- पु.१३७ एष ह्येव साधुकर्म कारयति तं यमेभ्यो लोकेभ्य
 उन्नीषति। एष एवासाधुकर्म कारयति तं
 यमधोनिनीषति । (कै.३.६५)
- पु.१३८ तेषां सततयुक्तानां भजतां प्रीतिपूर्वकम् ।
 ददामि बुद्धियोगं तं येन मामुपयान्ति ते ॥
 तेषामेवानुकम्पार्थमहमज्ञानं तमः ।
 नाशयाम्यात्मभावस्थो ज्ञानदीपेन भास्वता ॥(भ.गी.१०.११)
- पु.१३९ असत्यमप्रतिष्ठं ते जगदाहुरनीश्वरम् । (भ.गी.१६.८)
 मामात्मपरदेहेषु प्रद्विषन्तोऽभ्यसूयकाः॥ (भ.गी.१६.१८)
 तानहं द्विषतः क्रूरान् संसारेषु नराधमान् ।
 क्षिपाभ्यजस्तमशुभानासुरीष्वेव योनिषु ॥(भ.गी.१६.१९)
- पु.१४० दया चेद्गुणो निग्रहश्चेदोष इति न नियमोऽस्ति ;
 लोकेऽस्थानदयायाः स्थाननिग्रहस्य च गुणत्व
 दोषत्वदर्शनाभावात् । (ध्रु.प्र.२.२.१)

- पु.१४३ तेन प्रद्योतेनैष आत्मा निष्क्रामति। (ब.६.२.२८)
 पु.१४३ एषोणुरात्मा चेतसा वेदितव्यः। (म.३.१.१)
 पु.१४४ यथा च तक्षोभयथा। (ब.सू.३.३.३९)
 पु.१४९ वाचारम्भणं विकारो नामधेयं मृत्तिकेत्येव सत्यम्। (छ.६.१.४)
 पु.१५३ भवेदपि कार्यस्य विगीतत्वमप्रतिपाद्यत्वात् । न
 ह्यं सृष्ट्यादि-प्रपञ्चः प्रतिपिपादयिषितः ; न हि
 तत्प्रतिबद्धः कश्चित्पुरुषार्थो दृश्यते श्रूयते वा (ब.सू.भा.१.१.४)
 पु.१५३ मायामात्रं तु कातन्नैनानभिव्यक्तस्वरूपत्वात् (ब.सू.३२.३)
 पु.१५८ जातस्य हि ध्रुवो मृत्युः ध्रुवं जन्म मृतस्य च। (भ.गी.२.२७)
 पु.१५९ महीघटत्वं घटतः कमालिक कमालिक-
 चूर्णरजस्ततोऽणुः। (वि.पु.२.१२.४२)
 पु.१५९ उत्पत्तिविनाशादयः सतो द्रव्यस्यावस्थाविशेषाः ।
 उत्पत्तिवाग्यमवस्थाम् उपयातस्य द्रव्यस्य
 तद्विरोध्यवस्थान्तरप्राप्तिः विनाश इत्युच्यते। मृदद्र-
 व्यस्य पिण्डत्वकपालत्वचूर्णत्वादिवात् परिणामिद्रव्यस्य
 परिणामपरम्पराऽवर्जनीया । तत्र पूर्वावस्थस्य
 द्रव्यस्योत्तरावस्था प्राप्तिर्विनाशः । सैव तदस्थस्य
 चोत्पत्तिः। (भ.गी.ता.भा.२.२७)
 पु.१६१ सत्त्वासत्त्वे हि द्रव्यधर्मावित्युक्तम् । तत्र
 सत्त्वधर्मदिथन्तिरम् असत्त्वम्..... मृदव्यस्य
 पृथबुध्नोदराकारयोगो घटोऽस्तीति व्यवहारहेतुः ।
 तस्यैव तद्विरोध्यवस्थान्तरयोगो घटो नास्तीति

व्यवहारहेतुः । न च तत्दव्यतिरिक्तो घटाभावो
नाम कधिदुपलभ्यते।

(भ.गी.ग.भा.२.१.१८)

पु.१६१ असदेवेदमग्र आसीत्।

(छा.६.२.१)

असद्वा इदमग्र आसीत्।

(तै.७.१)

पु.१६२ असदव्यंपदेशान्वेति चेन्न धर्मन्तरेण वावयशेषात्
युक्तेः शब्दान्तराच्च।

(ब्र.सू.२.१.१८)

पु.१६२ इदं शब्दनिर्दिष्टस्य जगतः सत्त्वधर्मौ नामरूपे ;
असत्त्वधर्मस्तु तद्विरोधिनी सूक्ष्मावस्था । अतो
जगतो नामरूपयुक्तस्य तद्विरोधि सूक्ष्मदशापत्तिरसत्त्वम्।

(श्री.भा.२.१.१८)

पु.१६२ ज्योतींषि विष्णुः भुवनानि विष्णुः
वनानि विष्णुः गिरयो दिशश्च ।

नद्यः समुद्राश्च स एव सर्व-

यदस्ति यन्नास्ति च विप्रवर्य ॥

(वि.पु.२.२.१०)

पु.१६८ न ह्यल्पेन विपुलस्योत्पत्तिः । दशगुणं बृहतो ब्रह्मणः
कारणादल्पस्य कार्यत्वं हि प्रतिपद्यते।

(शु.प्र.२.२.१०)

पु.१६८ ... अत्यन्तसूक्ष्मतयाऽसत्कल्पस्वलीलोपकरण-
चिदचिद्वस्तुशरीरतया तन्मयः परमात्मा... (श्री.भा.१.४.२७)

पु.१६९ यदि भूतसूक्ष्ममव्याकृतमभ्युपगम्यते, कापिलंतन्त्र
सिद्धान्ताभयुपगमे कः प्रद्वेषः? तत्रपि हि भूतकारणमेव
अव्यक्तमित्युच्यते। तत्रोच्यते....न वयमव्यक्तं

तत्परिणामविशेषांश्च स्वरूपेणानभ्युपगच्छामः ; अपि
तु परंमपुरुषशरीरतया तदात्मकत्वविरहेण । (श्री.भा.१.६.३)

पु.१७० तदात्मानं स्वयमकुरुत ।

(तै.आ.७.१)

पु.१७१ मृत्पिण्डादेःकुलाल प्रभृतिरिह पृथक् तद्वदेवादिकर्ता
नोपादानं विकारै विरहित इति न द्वारमात्रे विकारात् ।
मृदृष्टान्तादिमात्रान्तच विकृतिरसौ स्यात् परस्यस्वरूपे
देहद्वारोर्णनाभिप्रभृतिविकृतिवद्व्यापृतेर्दर्शितत्वात् ॥

(अ.सा.१४४)

पु.१७२ पृथिव्यप्सु प्रलीयते, आपस्तेजसि लीयन्ते तेजो
वायौ लीयते.... भूतादिः महति लीयते ; महानव्यक्ते
लीयते ; अव्यक्तमक्षरे लीयते ; अक्षरं तमसिलीयते;
तमः परे देव एकी भवति । (पु.२)

पु.१७३ न कर्माविभागादिति चेन्नानादित्वादुपपद्यते
चाप्युपलभ्यते च । (ब्र.सू.२.१.३५)

पु.१७५ येन स्वाभावेन कारणभूतं वस्तु वस्त्वन्तरादव्यावृत्तं
तस्य स्वभावस्य तत्कार्येऽप्यनुवृत्तिः कार्ये
कारणसालक्षव्यम् । (श्री.भा. २.१.४)

पु.१७९ निर्गुणस्याप्रमेयस्य शुद्धस्याप्यमलात्मनः।
कथं सर्गादिकर्तृत्वं ब्रह्मणोऽभ्युपगम्यते॥
शक्तयः सर्वभावानामचिन्त्यज्ञानगोचराः।
यतोऽतो ब्रह्मणस्तास्तु सर्गाद्याभावशक्तयः।
भवन्ति तपतां श्रेष्ठ पावकस्य यथोष्णता ॥ (ब्र.पु.१.१११.१.२)

पु.१८० श्रुतेस्तु शब्दमूलत्वात्।

(व.न.२००५)

पु.१८० तक्प्रितिष्ठानादपि।

(व.न.२०३)

पु.१८१ आर्षं धर्मोपदेशं च वेदशास्त्राविरोधिना।

यस्तर्केणानुसन्धन्ते स धर्मं वेद नेतरः ॥ (म.१२.१०६)

पु.१८६ मायामात्रं तु कात्स्तर्येनानभिव्यक्तस्वरूपत्वात्।

पु.१८६ न तत्र रथा न रथयोगा न पन्थानो भवन्ति।

अथ रथान् रथयोगान् पथः सृजते । न तत्र आनन्दः

मुदः प्रमुदो भवन्ति । अथा ३३नन्दान्

मुदः प्रमुदः सृजते..... स हि कर्ता (व.६.३.१०)

पु.१८७ मायामात्रं तु कात्स्तर्येनानभिव्यक्तस्वरूपत्वात्।

पु.१८८ किं प्रबोध इव स्वप्नेऽपि पारमार्थिकी सृष्टिः
आहोस्त्वन्मायामयीति। (व.ग.मा.३.२.१)

पु.१८९ अस्तभ्नान् मायया व्यामवस्त्रसः। (क्रावेद. २.१३.५)

पु.१८९ दासानामिन्द्रो मायया। (क्रावेद. ४.३०.२१)

पु.१९० जनकस्य कुले जाता देवमायेव निर्मिता। (गामायणम् गा.१.१६)

पु.१९० तेन मायासहस्रं तच्छम्बरस्याशुगामिना।

बालस्य रक्षता देहमेकैकश्येन सूदितम् ॥ (व.पु.१.१९.२०)

पु.१९५ न ब्रह्मज्ञानमात्रं सांसारिकधर्मनिवृत्तिकारणम् ;

अपितु साक्षात्करपर्यन्तम्। (भास्त्री १.१.४)

पु.१९६ नावगतब्रह्मभावस्य यथापूर्वं सशारीरत्वं शक्यं

कर्त्पयितुं , वेदप्रमाणजनित ब्रह्मात्मभावविरोधात्।

शरीरे परिते उशर्गित्वं स्यन्त जीवत इति चेन्न,
सशरीरत्वस्य मिथ्याज्ञाननिमित्तत्वात् । न ह्यात्मनः
शरीरात्माभिमानलक्षणं मिथ्याज्ञानं मुक्त्वा उन्यतः
सशरीरत्वं शक्यं कल्पयितुम् । नित्यमशरीरत्वम्
अकर्मनित्तित्वादित्यवोचाम।

(ब्रह्म आ॒ आ॑ १११)

पु. १९६ यदि वास्तवं सशरीरत्वं भवेत् न जीवतस्तन्निवर्तेत्,
मिथ्याज्ञाननिमित्तं तु तत् । तच्चोत्पन्नतत्वज्ञानेन
जीवतापि शक्यं निवर्तयितुम्।

(भास्करा १११)

पु. १९८ तमेवं विद्वानमृत इह भवति ; नान्यः पन्था अयनाय
विद्यते।

(न आ॒ ३२०)

पु. २०१ ननु श्रुतब्रह्मणोऽपि यथापूर्वं संसारित्वदर्शनान्न
रज्जुस्वरूपकथनवदर्थवत्त्वमित्युक्तम् । अत्रोच्यते
ज्ञावगतब्रह्मात्मभावस्य यथापूर्वं संसारित्वं शक्यं
दर्शयितुं, वेदप्रमाणजनितब्रह्मात्मभावविग्रहात्।

(ब्रह्म आ॒ आ॑ ११२)

पु. २०३ तमेतं वेदानुवचनेन ब्राह्मणा विविदिषन्ति यज्ञेन।

पु. २०५ पुण्यापुण्य निबन्धनाचित्संर्गप्रयुक्त नानारूपभाकृत्वमेव
हि संसारः।

(श्री ३२० ३२१)

पु. २०६ यथा न क्रियते ज्योत्स्ना मलप्रक्षालणान्मणे :।
दोष प्रहाणान्नज्ञानमात्मनः क्रियते तथा ॥।
यथोदपानकरणात्क्रयते च जलाम्बरम्।
सदेव नीयते व्यक्तिमसतः सम्भवः कुतः ॥।

तथा हेयगुणध्वंसादवदोधादयो गुणाः।

प्रकाश्यन्ते न जन्मन्ते नित्या एवात्मनो हि ते॥

पु.२०७ न ह वै सशरीरस्य सतः प्रियाप्रिययोरपहरिरस्तः ;

अशरीरं वा व सन्तं न प्रियाप्रिये स्पृशतः। (का ८.१२.८)

पु.२०८ स एकधा भवति त्रिधा भवति पञ्चधा सप्तधा... (ज्ञा ८.२६.१)

पु.२०८ वालाग्रशतभागस्य शतधा कल्पितस्य चा

भागो जीवः स विज्ञेयः स चानन्त्यापकल्पते ॥ (ष्ठ ७.१)

पु.२०९ अत एव चानन्याधिपतिः। (ब्र.न् ८.२.१)

पु.२१० अत्रानधिपतिरिति नोक्तम् ; किन्त्वनन्याधिपतिरिति
अत्रायमभिप्रायः - स्वाभाविकशेषिणः परमपुरुषादन्यः
नाधिपतिर्मुक्तस्येति । अन्यथा ह्यनन्याधिपतिरित्येतावत्तलम्।

पु.२१० यस्यात्मा शरीरं....यमात्मानमन्तरो यमयति। (व.८.५.२६)

अन्तः प्रविष्टः शास्ता जनानां सर्वात्मा। (न आ.३.६६.३)

पु.२१७ प्रीतिपूर्वमनुध्यानं भक्तिरित्यभिधीयते।

पु.२२२ ओमित्येवात्मानं ध्यायत। (मु २.२६)

निचाय्यतं मृत्युमुखात्प्रमुच्यते। (कठ १.३.१५)

ध्याननिर्मधनाभ्यासादेवं पश्येन्निगूढवत्। (मु २.२५)

पु.२२४ आवृत्तिरसकृदुपदेशात्। (ब्र.सू.४.४.१)

पु.२२५ आप्रयाणात्। (ब्र.सू.४.१.६)

पु.२२५ सर्वपिक्षा च यज्ञादिश्रुतेरश्ववत् । (ब्र.सू.३.४.२६)

पु॒ २२८ इयाज सोऽपि सुबहून् यज्ञान् ज्ञानव्यपाश्रयः

ब्रह्मविद्यामधिष्ठाय तर्तुं मृत्युमविद्यया॥ (वि पृ ६ ६ १०)

पु॒ २३० यन्मुहूर्तं क्षणं वापि वासुदेवो न चिन्त्यते ।

सा हानिस्तन्महच्छ्रद्रं सा भ्रान्तिः सा च विक्रिया ।

(गृह्णपुराणम् २२२ २२)

पु॒ २३१ अत्र ब्रह्म समश्वते।

(कठ २ ३ १४)

तमेवं विद्वानमृतं इह भवति।

(तै आर ३ १२ १७)

॥अकारादिक्रमेण सङ्घीताक्षरविवरणम्॥

अ.सा	-	अधिकरणसारावलिः
ऐ.	-	ऐतरेयोपनिषद्
कठ.	-	कठोपनिषद्
कौ.	-	कौषीतक्युपनिषद्
छा.	-	छान्दोग्योपनिषद्
जै.सू.	-	जैमिनिसूत्रम्
तै.	-	तैत्तरीयोपनिषद्
तै.आ.	-	तैत्तरीये आनन्दवल्ली
तै.आर.	-	तैत्तरीय आरण्यकम्
तै.आ.पु.सू.	-	तैत्तरीय आरण्यके पुरुषसूक्तम्
तै.ना.	-	तैत्तरीये नारायणानुवाकः
नृ.ता.	-	नृसिंहतापनीयोपनिषद्
पु.	-	पुटसङ्ख्या
प्र.	-	प्रश्नोपनिषद्
प्र.सं.(प्र.भा)-	प्रथमसम्पुटे (प्रथमो भागः)	
बृ.	-	बृहदारण्यकोपनिषद्
ब्र.सू.	-	ब्रह्मसूत्राणि
ब्र.सू.शा.भा.-	ब्रह्मसूत्रशाङ्करभाष्यम्	

भ.गी.	- भगवद्गीता
भ.गी.रा.भा.	- भगवद्गीतारामानुजभाष्यम्
मनु.	- मनुस्मृतिः
मा.का.	- माण्डूक्यकारिका
मु.	- मुण्डकोपनिषद्
वि.पु.	- विष्णुपुराणम्
श्री.भा.	- श्रीभाष्यम्
श्रु.प्र.	- श्रुतप्रकाशिका
श्वे.	- श्वेताश्वतरोपनिषद्
सा.का.	- साङ्घ्यकारिका
सु.	- सुबालोपनिषद्